

CLASS NOTES -- The Four Gospels -- LUKE

INTRODUCTION

These notes assume a prior study of Matthew and John. While Luke is one of the Synoptic Gospels, and thus has much in common with Matthew and Mark, it does, somewhat like John, include a great deal of material not found in the other Gospels. 59% of the material in Luke is found only in this third Gospel -- see the bottom of page one in Class Notes on John).

The following study chiefly concerns only those passages peculiar to Luke.

Luke is mentioned by name only in Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11 and Philemon 24. However, we know a great deal about his activities and his relationship with Paul from the places in Acts where he, as the author of Acts, identifies himself with Paul and his party by the use of first person plural pronouns. He was a convinced believer (Luke 1:1); a physician by profession, a beloved physician (Col. 4:14); a creditable historian (as revealed particularly by the generally acknowledged historical accuracy of the book of Acts); a companion of Paul on many occasions; and an outstandingly loyal and faithful friend to him (2 Tim. 4:11).

Luke was written before Acts, as it is the first of the two epistles mentioned in Luke 1:3 and Acts 1:1. It seems evident that Acts was written after Paul had been in prison in Rome for two years, but before he went to trial there (Acts 28:30, 31). The **Pulpit Commentary** states, "During the Roman imprisonment, which immediately followed AD 63 - 64, the work [the Gospel according to Luke], and not improbably its sequel in the Acts, was finally revised and put out." (Introduction to Luke, page xviii, volume 16).

It has been suggested that the book of Acts was composed as a defense for Paul in his forthcoming hearing before Caesar. Addressed to Theophilus (meaning "lover of God"), both the Gospel and the Acts could be a very powerful defense for Paul against the accusations of the Jews. Who would better know about Paul than his almost constant companion, Luke? As for the Gospel, manifesting the education and compassion of the physician, Luke collected, with all the skill of the historian, the records of those who were eyewitnesses, and composed this lovely treatise with perfect understanding (and inspiration) "from above." ("From the very first" [Luke 1:3 - KJV] is from the Greek *anōthen* and would be better rendered 'from above' [It is so translated in John. 3:31; 19:11 and James. 1:17; 3:15, 17]. Only here is *anōthen* translated 'from the very first.' -- taken from the footnote on Luke 1:3 in the Scofield Bible).

If those delegated to view the evidence in the case read Luke and Acts as testimony for the defense, it is no wonder, from the human standpoint, that Paul was set free (if, as seems to have been the case, there were two imprisonments).

Matthew presents Christ as King, Mark as the perfect Servant, and John as God manifested in the flesh. Luke presents Him in His perfect humanity. The expression "Son of Man" is a key to this Gospel. "It was not His human birth which constituted Him the Son of Man. That birth, indeed, was the fulfillment of the promise which the name implied; but the Son of Man, He declared explicitly, 'Descended out of Heaven' (John 3:13) and He said again,

"What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?" -- Sir Robert Anderson. For a full treatment of this title of Christ see chapter three of "The Lord from Heaven" by Sir Robert Anderson.

NOTES:

JOHN the BAPTIST -- events related to his birth (1:5 - 25, 57 - 80).

1:5. John the Baptist was a Levite. Both father and mother were from the tribe of Levi. He was probably a Nazarite -- see v. 15. In contrast, Christ was from the tribe of Judah and was NOT a Nazarite, for He drank wine. See Luke 7:33, 34. Thus John had long hair (if he was a full-fledged Nazarite) while Christ did NOT -- in spite of the way He is usually pictured by artists.

1:6. Zacharias and Elizabeth were not righteous **because** they walked in all the commandments, etc. (compare Romans 3:20). It is rather a case of those who were already righteous by faith, walking in all the commandments. The result of their **walk** was not righteousness (that was the **basis** for the walk), but **blamelessness**. Paul's testimony in Philippians 3:6 proves that walking in the Law blameless does not save a man. Saul of Tarsus had it backwards. He was trying to be righteous by walking blamelessly. This couple had it straight -- and they were "Old Testament saints." See note at 2:25.

1:13. See verses 60, 63. It would be an interesting study to note all those in Scripture who were named before birth. See for example, besides John: Ishmael (Gen. 16:11); Isaac (Gen. 17:19); Josiah (1 Kings 13:2); Cyrus (Isa. 44:28) and Christ (Luke 1:31; Isa. 9:6; 7:14).

1:18. It was unbelief to ask for a sign, as v. 20 indicates. Observe in verse 34 that Mary did not ask for a sign. She wondered **how** it could happen, but did not doubt that it **would** happen (vs. 38, 45). When Christ was walking on the water He told the disciples, "It is I, be not afraid" (Matt. 14:27). Peter asked for a sign, "**IF** it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water." Christ rebuked him with the words, "O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?" To ask for a sign when God has spoken is unbelief.

1:20. Contrast verse 45. See Ezekiel 3:26, 27; 24:27; 29:21; 33:21, 22. God caused Ezekiel to become dumb because of the unbelief of **Israel** -- Zacharias because of his **own** unbelief. Both were dumb only until the fulfillment of a specific prophecy. In the case of Ezekiel it was a prophecy concerning judgment, here it is a prophecy in preparation for salvation. In application, we can have no effective testimony (we will be "dumb") if we do not walk by **faith**. Compare 2 Cor. 4:13.

1:62. Was he made deaf also -- or did they forget that, though he could not speak, he **could** hear? How very human for them to do this.

1:69. A horn is used as a symbol for a **king**. See Daniel 7:24; 8:20; Rev. 17:12; etc.

1:71, 74. This salvation is to be accomplished at His **Second** Coming. Because they

failed to distinguish things that differ, and looked for this at His **first** coming, the Pharisees rejected Him -- and even some of the believers were discouraged (Luke 24:21a).

1:76. John was the last of the "Old Testament" prophets.

1:77 Here is what He accomplished at His first coming -- though it will be **applied** to Israel **as a nation** at His return.

CHRIST'S BIRTH and associated events (1:26 -- 2:52).

1:28. Compare Judges 5:24. If Mary is to be worshipped because she is blessed **among** women, why not also worship Jael who was "blessed **above**" (KJV) or "**Most** blessed of" (NASB) women?

1:31, 36; 2:21. Mary was not merely a "surrogate mother" (an incubator for a child not really her own) -- she **conceived**. Christ was the **seed** of the woman, bringing about a real identification with the human race, and with Abraham (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 2:16). Compare Isa. 7:14; 8:3; Matt. 1:20.

1:56. Mary did not run away (v. 39) to hide the fact she was pregnant, for about the time it would begin to show she returned home. She made this trip, probably, so she could talk things over with Elizabeth -- since she, too, had been visited by the power of God (v. 36). What a blessed fellowship these two godly women must have had during these three months! Mary probably stayed with Elizabeth until John was born -- for she came when Elizabeth was six months pregnant (1:36) and stayed "about three months."

2:8 - 20. See Appendix # 1.

2:22. This was a period of 40 days. See Lev. 12:2 - 4.

2:25. Like Zacharias and Elizabeth, Simeon was an "Old Testament" saint -- justified but not "made perfect." See Heb. 12:23.

2:26. "Lord" is the Greek word *kurios*. **Here** it refers to God the Father. It is not totally accurate to say that the Old Testament "Jehovah" (consistently translated by *Kurios* in New Testament quotations from the Old Testament) is the New Testament "Jesus." Often this is true, but here -- and in some O.T. passages (such as Psa. 110:1, 4) -- "Jehovah" (*Kurios*) refers specifically to God the Father.

2:27. "The parents" (here) and "His parents" (v. 41) refer only to Joseph's guardianship as foster father. Notice how this chapter guards against the idea that Joseph was the real (biological) father of Christ in verses 33, 48 and 49. Christ Himself identified His real Father when (in verse 49) He gently rebuked Mary for the inaccurate statement she had made in verse 49. Consider also the parenthetical remark in 3:23.

2:30. He was not looking at a statement of faith, a creed, a membership card, or a record

of good works. When he said, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation" he was looking at a **Person** -- the Lord Jesus Christ.

SALVATION -- Luke 2:30

Not a creed to read and sign,
Nor a culture pure and fine;
Salvation is a person.

Not a lesson to be learned,
Or good wages to be earned;
Salvation is a **person**.

God became a man to die,
Conquer death and rise on high;
Christ Jesus, **He's** the Person!

Do not fret nor toil nor spin,
Take the blessed Savior in!
Salvation is a **Person!**

(Chorus -- if this is ever put to music)

A Person died for you and me,
And we must know Him personally.
His grace abounding, full and free,
Will save us for eternity!

---- William P.

Heath

2:33. "**Joseph** and His mother," **not** "His **father** and mother." Similar wording at v. 43.

2:38. This was personal testimony. She did not **preach**, nor even **teach** formally.

2:43. Jesus surely knew the family had left for home, yet He allowed them to go on without Him and spend a whole day looking for Him. (A day's journey before they missed Him, another day to return to Jerusalem, and they found Him on the third day -- v. 46) Why? It was that He might bring to their attention His true parentage and His mission in life.

When a Jewish boy came to the age of twelve he was looked upon as a man -- a **son** (Greek word *huios*), and no longer just a **child** (Greek word *teknon*). At this time he became responsible for his own decisions and assumed adult religious duties. When Christ reached this point in life His first decision was to be about His Father's business. Today Jewish boys enter this stage with a confirmation ceremony called "Bar Mitzvah" (which means "A son of the commandment").

2:49. Here is a gentle reminder to Mary that Joseph is **not** His father, a fact she -- of all people -- knew very well indeed.

2:52. Although He grew in **wisdom** as a normal child, learning to talk, etc., yet **as God** He was upholding the universe (as He had been doing even while in Mary's womb). Notice Heb. 10:5. "When He cometh into the world [at His birth] **He saith** --." Mary heard only the whimper of a healthy, normal baby, but God heard Him **say**, "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared for me ... Lo I come to do Thy will, O God."

The MATERNAL GENEALOGY of CHRIST (3:23 - 38).

3:23. "--Joseph, which was the son [in law] of Heli --." This is the genealogy of Christ through Mary. Both Joseph and Mary are descendents of David: Joseph through Solomon and Mary through Nathan. Both Solomon and Nathan were sons of Bathsheba and David, so they were full brothers (1 Chron. 3:5). Many of Solomon's descendents became kings, but he was denied the honor of being an ancestor to **THE King -- Christ**. He is the **seed** of David through His mother, but inherits the **legal right to the throne** through His foster father, Joseph. Joseph links Christ to the covenants and promises and goes back only to Abraham. Mary links Him to the human race and goes back to Adam. The genealogy through Joseph is found in Matt. 1:1 - 17.

3:24. Interestingly, but incidentally, there are three Josephs in this genealogy aside from Christ's foster father. See vs. 24, 26 and 30.

3:38. Only 72 generations are listed in this genealogy from Adam to Christ, a period of some 4,000 years. From Christ's first coming to His second coming will be some 2,000 years, and another 1,000 years during the Millennium will give us a total of about 7,000 years from Adam to the eternal state. This would be, at most, some 200 to 250 generations in all of human history. Therefore, when Deut. 7:9 says, "God ... keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a **thousand** generations," it is a figure of speech. This same figure is involved in the statement "as the stars of heaven for multitude," or our cry to our children from time to time, "I've told you a **hundred** times not to do that!"

RAISING OF THE WIDOW'S SON (7:11 - 18)

7:12. This young man was the **only** son of his mother. Christ also raised from the dead an only daughter (Luke 8:42) and an only brother (John 11:5). It seems God had a special concern for those who lost an **only** son, daughter or brother for He, above all others, was soon to know the agony of facing the death of **His** only Son. See also Gen. 22:2; Zech. 12:10; Luke 9:38.

7:14. Christ raised the daughter of Jairus who had just died, this young man who was on the way to the cemetery, and Lazarus who had been dead four days and was already buried.

7:15. Christ interrupted the funeral. When people want a person who has been saved out of Catholicism or Modernism to continue in the church because of the beautiful buildings or

liturgy, it is like continuing a funeral because it is such a beautiful ceremony -- **after the body has been raised from the dead!**

7:16. They seem to see in Christ the prophet like Moses referred to in Deut. 18:15 - 19. Compare John 1:21; 6:14.

CHRIST ANOINTED IN THE PHARISEE'S HOUSE & the resulting parable (7:36 - 50).

7:36 - 50. This passage is a study in justification: **1.** The woman admitted, by her tears (vs. 38, 44), that she was, indeed, the sinner of verses 37, 39. This justified God, should He condemn and judge her. **2.** She was justified ("saved") by **faith** (v. 50) as an act of **grace**. "He **frankly** forgave" can be translated, "He, **without cause**, forgave." There was nothing **in her** that deserved such treatment. **3.** Her conduct justified God's method of dealing with her (vs. 44 - 47). The most important thing in the life of the believer is his **love** for **Christ**.

7:37, 38. There were three anointings of Christ; this one near the beginning of His ministry, and two at its close. In John 12:3 it was an anointing by Mary, the sister of Lazarus, **six** days before the Passover. In Matt. 26:7 and Mark 14:3 it was by an unnamed woman **two** days before the Passover (Mk. 14:1 -- See the note on Matt. 26:6 - 13, in Class Notes on Matthew for a study of these three passages:). Also Christ was "The Anointed One" (the meaning of the word "Messiah") in three capacities: Prophet, Priest and King. It is at least interesting that David (who is an outstanding type of Christ) was anointed (as king each time, however) three times. See 1 Sam. 16:13; and 2 Sam. 2:4; 5:3.

7:45. A kiss was a customary greeting in New Testament times. Compare 1 Cor. 16:20. In our culture (U.S.A.) this would have been a handshake.

7:47. "Her sins **have been** forgiven" (NASB). That is, her love was the **evidence**, not the **basis** for the forgiveness. **Faith** was the **basis** for it (v. 50), her **love** was the **response** and her **devotion** the **testimony**. Christ gave her assurance of salvation. We have all been forgiven much -- but only as we begin to realize **HOW** much can we love much. How very weak is our love when we are self-righteous!

WOMEN WHO MINISTERED TO CHRIST on preaching tours (8:1 - 3).

8:1. His travels were much more extensive than the maps of His travels indicate. See John 21:25.

8:2 These women evidently traveled with Him also, along with the twelve disciples. This made quite a large company.

8:3. "Others" is the Greek *heteros* -- others of a different kind.

JESUS AGAIN PASSES THROUGH SAMARIA (9:51 - 56).

9:54. The time will come for this course of action however -- during the Tribulation, when it will be Elijah, back on the scene, who brings it about. See Rev. 11:5.

THE SEVENTY SENT FORTH (10:1 - 12).

10:1. "Other" here, as in 8:3, is *heteros* in the Greek. The seventy did not include the twelve apostles.

PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN (10:25 - 37).

10:26, 28. The lawyer had the right verses, but not the right application.

10:27. The story of the Good Samaritan illustrates what it means to love our neighbors as ourselves. With the thought, "To whom should I do Good?" in mind, Christ turns it around and asks, "Who would you be willing to have do good to you?" What we are willing to have done for us we should be glad to do for our "neighbor." The priest and the Levite did not recognize even the battered Jew as a neighbor -- much less the Samaritan!

10:29. The content of Luke 10:27-b is found in Lev. 19:18. The answer to the question of the lawyer is found in Lev. 19:34 and illustrated here by the parable of the Good Samaritan. If his works had justified him (v. 28) he would not have needed the "loophole" of verse 29 (how very like a lawyer to look for a loophole!). In seeking such a modification of the demands of the very laws he himself had quoted (v. 27) he was admitting he could not meet them. He should have openly admitted this and cast himself on God's mercy and grace.

10:30 - 35. While the basic meaning of this passage ministers to the question of the lawyer, still to not recognize Christ in it, as the ultimate Good Samaritan, is to miss a great blessing. Remember John 8:48 where Christ was accused of being a Samaritan. The Samaritans were hated because they were only partly Jewish. Christ was only a Jew on His mother's side -- His Father was **GOD** -- and He was hated for this! Like the man in the parable, we are half dead (physically alive but spiritually dead), have no raiment (spiritually naked), have been wounded by sin and are helpless. Religion, like the priest and the Levite, cannot help us. But Christ, though hated and despised by the religious leaders, comes to us **where we are** -- in all of our deep need (Phil. 2:6 - 8). Then He does all of the work on our behalf (Heb. 1:3 -- "When He had **by Himself** purged our sins --"), even making provision for our care until He comes back! See Phil. 1:6.

10:33. See a discussion of the Samaritans (from a Jewish viewpoint) by Josephus. Antiquities IX, XIV, 3.

10:35. Is the "host" (KJV), who is given the responsibility of caring for the helpless man, a picture of the Holy Spirit -- the "Other Comforter" of John 14:16 - 18?

10:36, 37. The lawyer was thinking of his responsibility to his neighbor -- and seeking an excuse for **not** ministering to him. When the shoe is on the other foot, and the **Samaritan** is

willing to minister to the **Jew**, the lawyer is quick to recognize him as a neighbor. Christ is saying, in effect, "Whoever you would be willing to have minister to you, be willing to minister to him." The neighbor concept goes both ways.

MARTHA and MARY IN CONTRAST (10:38 - 42).

10:38 - 42. Martha was concerned about the wrong things. Also she was trying to "use" Christ to scold Mary. Compare note at 12:14. Several times people tried to instruct Christ and each time they were instructed instead. Compare Matt. 14:15; 16:22, 23; 20:21; Luke 7:3 - 9; 12:13, 14; John 2:3. How much time we waste in prayer when we are basically just trying to give Christ His orders for the day instead of first sitting quietly at His feet to hear His word!

10:40. Martha was questioning Christ's care for her -- Mary was demonstrating her care for Christ! People often do not "care" about others (Psa. 142:4; Phil. 2:20). Martha was not the only one to question whether or not Christ cared. See Mark 4:38. How wonderful to know He **does** care (1 Pet. 5:7). Later Martha finally sat at His feet to hear His word (John 11:20 - 27).

PARABLE OF THE PERSISTENT FRIEND (11:5 - 13).

11:7, 8. The friend was not led to action by the plight presented to him, but by his own inconvenience at being interrupted at midnight by the persistent pleading. Yet he does respond, reluctantly of course, to the request. When we have a **real need** God will be moved by His concern for us -- but even so we should not fail to keep reminding Him of that need. "For every one who asks and **keeps on asking** receives, and to him who seeks and **keeps on seeking** finds, and to him who knocks and **keeps on knocking** the door will be opened" (Luke 11:10 -- Amplified Bible). The persistence is not to pressure God into an answer, but an evidence that we really do sense our need, and our dependence on Him. Verse 11 indicates that their greatest need was for the Holy Spirit -- whom every believer today already has.

11:13. I wonder how many, if any, asked for the Holy Spirit? If the departure of the unclean spirit in verse 24 had been followed by a request for the Holy Spirit, the unclean spirit could not have returned. In John 20:22 the disciples are commanded to receive the Spirit. Today every believer is indwelt by the Spirit apart from asking for or, consciously, receiving Him (Rom. 8:9).

PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL and context (12:13 - 34).

12:14. Christ shall one day be the judge, but not for the physical welfare of men. It will be for the holiness and the glory of God. He is now the Savior, not the Judge. This man was concerned about his wealth when he should have been concerned about his soul. Compare the note at 10:38 - 42. The following parable (vs. 16 - 21) and on through verse 34 is instruction about riches, as an expanded answer to the man of verse 14. In verse 31 he is told how to obtain his needs. In verse 32 he is instructed to desire the kingdom of God, not riches. In verses 33, 34 he is directed toward sharing instead of coveting. Compare the note at Matt. 12:19, 20 in the Class Notes on Matthew.

12:16 - 21. While this is a parable and 16:19 - 31 is a factual account, the parable can very well be considered with Luke 16 as illustrating the kind of error of which this rich man was guilty. Verse 17 here indicates this rich man had no concern for the poor around him (such as Lazarus in chapter 16), but was only concerned with his own luxurious life style (compare 12:19 with 16:19, 25-a).

12:19. The rich fool was looking forward to retirement -- but had made no preparation for eternity. He is indeed a fool who prepares for what **may** come, but neglects to prepare for what is **certain** to come. See Prov. 30:21, **22**. Linking this verse with Luke 16:19 - 21 we come to the conclusion that instead of saving up for old age and retirement, this man could have shared with any lepers who might have been at his gate (the poor around him) and laid up treasure in heaven. By giving his goods to care for the poor and needy he could have been "rich toward God."

12:22 - 32. This special provision is in view of the kingdom (vs. 31, 32). When they have God's righteousness (Matt. 6:33) and have been given the kingdom (Luke 12:32) they will not need to worry or fear. In the presence of the One who can feed 5,000 with a boy's lunch, quiet the stormy sea, heal the sick and raise the dead, there is no need for "worrying about tomorrow."

We are not in this situation today, and are told to provide for our families (1 Tim. 5:8) -- which involves preparation for our tomorrows. However we are not to be "full of cares, but full of prayers," as someone has paraphrased Phil. 4:6. The circumstances then and now are different, but at least two principles are the same. We are to put God's interests before our own -- and we need to trust Him, rather than worry. See note at Matt. 6:25 - 34 in Class Notes on Matthew.

12:32. Here is the "nation" referred to in Matt. 21:43. Consult the note there in the Class Notes on Matthew. The kingdom in view is the millennial kingdom and it is to be given to the believing remnant of Israel -- not to us.

CHRIST A DIVIDER OF MEN IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS (12:49 - 59).

12:49. It is not this coming baptism of the unbelievers with fire, itself, which Christ is eagerly anticipating, but the time of blessing which can only come after the necessary judgment has taken place. See 2 Thess. 1:7 - 9; Matt. 3:10 - 12 with regard to this baptism.

12:50. This baptism is not a water ceremony -- that had been taken care of at the very beginning of His ministry. This is the baptism referred to in Rom. 6:4, etc., when all the waves of God's **judgment** on our sin rolled over His head at Calvary. It is His death baptism.

12:59. Man's sin is against **God**, and hence is of infinite seriousness. Also, the lost continue to add more sins to the list as they blaspheme God for their plight. Notice that the judgments poured out during the Tribulation produce blasphemy, rather than repentance, on the part of those judged (Rev. 16:9, 11, 21). Thus there will never come a day when the lost will have paid for their sins and will, at long last, be saved!

MEN MUST NOT JUDGE, BUT REPENT (13:1 - 5).

13:1, 2. See "Antiquities of the Jews" XVIII, III, 2 -- Josephus.

13:2 - 5. The warning, "Ye shall all likewise perish" was carried out in 70 ad because they did indeed fail to repent. The following parable indicates they had escaped judgment thus far because of the longsuffering of God -- but that His patience was almost at an end. See verses 6 - 9. Notice His heartfelt appeal and warning in verses 34, 35.

PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE (13:6 - 9).

13:7. It is at least noteworthy that Christ's earthly ministry lasted three years. But when the **nation** had brought forth no fruit, and was worthy of judgment, Christ forgave them (Luke 23:34) and sent Peter and The Twelve to preach to them in the power of the Holy Spirit, whom He would send (Acts 1:8). Again, no fruit was found on the Fig tree (Acts 7). It was then "cut down" so it would not "cumber the ground" -- so it would not get in the way of God reaching out to the Gentiles. See Rom. 11:11 - 15 and 1 Thess. 2:15, 16.

HEALING OF THE CRIPPLE ON THE SABBATH (13:10 - 17).

13:11. Being bowed together, with her head facing back toward herself, she could see only herself. How many are spiritually "bowed together" so that self fills their vision? How much we need, at times, to be "made straight."

TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM (13:22 - 35).

13:23 - 30. Here is an important and clear question. If the Universalists are right, and they are **not**, He should have told them plainly that **ALL** will be saved! In contrast, He warned that **MANY** will be excluded. This is a definite answer to a very clear question. The fate awaiting those who will **not** be saved is described graphically in verses 27, 28.

13:25 - 27. Compare Matt. 7:22, 23.

13:31. Satan was using these men to tempt Christ to fear. See 4:13. Compare Neh. 6:10 - 14. Humanly speaking, He had more to fear from the Pharisees than from Herod.

13:33. Compare John 7:41, 52. The Pharisees were setting their eyes on where prophets were **born** -- Christ on where they **died**, emphasizing the history of unbelief of the city of Jerusalem.

13:34. Strong Calvinists teach that men's decisions cannot limit God -- that He can, and does, do what He desires no matter what men's decisions are. Yet here God the Son says, "How often I **wanted** to gather your children together ... **BUT you would not**" (NASB). God made the sovereign choice to limit **Himself** by giving men the privilege and responsibility of making true decisions (for which God holds them accountable). This is not a denial of His sovereignty,

but a magnificent exercise of it. In His wisdom and power He is able to accomplish His will, not by refusing to give men "free will" but by working around it. In His majestic "game of chess" with mankind He does not have to make His opponent's moves for him in order to win the game!

PARABLE OF THE AMBITIOUS GUEST (14:7 - 14).

14:10. "Have worship" in the KJV should read, "be honored." It is the Greek word *doxa* ("glory"). Only here is this word translated "worship." Every other reference to worship uses a different Greek word.

PARABLES ABOUT COUNTING THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP (14:28 - 33).

14:28. See Ex. 32:12; Psa. 138:8; Phil. 1:6.

If one who is saved by His wonderful grace
Can ever, forever, be lost,
Then **God** is the worker who started to build
Before He had counted the cost.

---- W. P. Heath

14:28 - 33. "For" (v. 28) ... "so likewise" (v. 33). The main thought is that one should not lightly decide to be a **disciple** of Christ. He should face the implications and responsibilities and be sure he can finish before he undertakes to begin. Israel failed to do this in Exodus 19:8. They too quickly and self-confidently said, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." They were not able to fulfill their promise even long enough to get the written Law in their hands. Salvation is **not** in view here in Luke -- it is **service** under Law.

For us, under grace, service is not based on **our** ability to carry out the work, but **His** ability to work in us and through us (Phil. 1:6; 2:13; Eph. 2:10; 2 Cor. 9:8; etc.). Thus, under grace, it was **God** who sat down first and determined that He could finish what He started (Phil. 1:6; Rom. 8:37; 2 Cor. 2:14). Our decision to serve Christ is not to be thoughtless however. The "procedure" under grace is:

Experience true salvation by grace without works (Eph. 2:8, 9).

Present our bodies as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1, 2).

Learn to walk by faith (Romans chapter 6).

Learn to have no confidence in the flesh (Rom. 7:18; Phil. 3:3).

Learn to walk in the Spirit (Romans chapter 8; Gal. 5:16, 25).

THINK -- not of our ability to complete what we start (as in Luke 14) but of what we have been fitted to do in His plan for us (Rom. 12:3; Eph. 2:10).

Trust Him to complete what He started (Phil. 1:6). See note at 14:28.

THE LOST SHEEP -- or, better, "The SEEKING SHEPHERD" (God the Son is in view here. See John chapter 10) -- **(15:1 - 7)**.

15:1, 2. See the note at 16:20. Compare Psa. 147:2, 3; Luke 14:35; 19:6, 7.

15:2. Praise the Lord, that's how I came to be received!

15:4. See Psa. 119:176! See also Ezek. 34:3 - 5. The Pharisees, as shepherds of Israel, should have gone after the lost sheep themselves -- but instead they found fault with the One who did! See the rest of Ezekiel 34 also.

15:6. "With me" -- See note at v. 10. Compare vs. 9, 32.

THE LOST COIN -- or, better, "The SEEKING WOMAN" (Possibly God the Holy Spirit is suggested here) -- **(15:8 - 10).**

15:10. It does not say **here** that the **angels** are rejoicing (although that is no doubt true), but that there is joy in their **presence**. It seems clear it is **God Himself** who is rejoicing! Notice the rejoicing in the father's house in v. 23 -- where it is the father leading the others in their jubilation. Also see "with me" in v. 9.

THE LOST SON -- or, better, "THE LOVING, LONGING and FORGIVING FATHER" -- (God the Father is in view) -- **(15:11 - 32).** *Note -- The younger son is usually referred to as "the prodigal son." The applicable dictionary definition of "prodigal" is: "1. Recklessly extravagant. 2. Characterized by wasteful expenditure; Lavish.."*

15:11 and following. The father depicts God the Father, the younger son pictures the "publicans and sinners" of verses 1, 2 and the elder son represents the Pharisees and scribes (v. 2). The sonship here does not relate to personal sonship resulting from the new birth, but to the sonship in view in Ex. 4:22, 23 and Hosea 11:1 -- based on the covenants. The two preceding parables also do not picture a lost soul being saved, but a son of Abraham straying from Abraham's God. Notice the "lost" lamb was one out of a hundred, not the ratio that exists between unsaved and saved. Also the lamb was the property of the shepherd. He sought **until he found it**, and **when** (not "if") he found it he rejoiced. The woman owned the coin even when it was "lost," sought it until she found it, and when (not "if") she found it she rejoiced. **The younger son was a son in the pig pen as much as when he was in his father's embrace --** but was poor and miserable and, no doubt, looked and smelled more like a pig than a son!

In application, the younger son resembles the true believer out of fellowship with God and deep into sin. The elder brother reminds us of the legalistic believer who thinks the sinning saint has lost his salvation -- and will not recognize him as his brother.

15:17, 18. The prodigal was not seeking the **father** -- but only the benefits to be had at the servants' table. Men do not seek God (Rom. 3:11; John 6:44 -- with 12:32; Luke 19:10), but only the **benefits** they desire for themselves. They may seek peace (though they do not know the **way** of peace -- Rom. 3:17), forgiveness, release from guilt feelings, etc., but they do not seek **GOD!** This is one of the evidences of the total depravity of man.

15:20. See NASB margin, "-- and kissed him again and again." This kiss was not merely a quick peck on the cheek. Contrast how the Law would have dealt with him (Deut. 21:18 - 21) and David's half hearted forgiveness of Absalom (2 Sam. 14:33 and context). David had to be talked into forgiving Absalom at all and then dragged his feet all the way. The father

in Luke 15 voluntarily ran to meet the son, kissed him over and over, put shoes on his feet, put a ring on his finger, threw a party for him and defended him before his older brother.

15:20 - 22. Compare 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sin He is faithful and just to **have forgiven** us our sins and to **have cleansed** us from all unrighteousness." -- A translation suggested by Hal Lindsey. The son was forgiven before he even had a chance to confess (see v. 20), but he could not **enjoy** that forgiveness until he confessed (v. 21).

15:23. It seems the father had been expecting the return of his son, looked forward to it, and had already prepared a fatted calf for the welcome home party.

15:24. True -- he was not **worthy** to be called a son, but he **was** a son -- and the father **called** him a son. Contrast the reaction of his brother (v. 30) who was looking at what the prodigal had **done** instead of what he **was**.

15:25 - 32. The elder brother, **in his heart**, was as much a prodigal as the younger one. He was really saying, "If he can do those things and be welcomed back in style -- I could do it too." He had not been a "good boy" because he loved his father, but out of fear of the consequences. The father replied, in essence, "Don't forget he has been starving with the pigs, while you have been feasting at my table; his inheritance is gone, while you still have yours."

The believer today who goes astray is received back lovingly by the Father, but he is not to be envied. He has missed the spiritual food on the Father's table and fellowship with the Father -- and has lost forever some, at least, of the rewards he could have received.

15:28. The father loved both sons. He ran to meet the prodigal, but he also "went out" to the elder son and patiently pleaded with him. The elder brother, as has been noted, was a prodigal at heart -- he would have done the same things the prodigal did if he had had the courage. Now he is angry because the consequences he feared for himself are not being experienced by his brother.

15:29. The father was thinking of the prodigal -- the other son was thinking only of **himself**.

15:30. It was not the **father's** wealth the prodigal had squandered, but his **own**. The father had already given it to him (v. 12).

It seems the elder brother (like the accusers in John 8:4, 5) would have been happy if the Law had been invoked, without mercy, and his brother had been taken out and stoned to death (Deut. 21:18 - 21). He sees his brother's sin, but not his repentance.

The elder brother did not say "**my brother**" but, sarcastically it seems, "**thy son**." He disowned his brother and rebuked the father for not doing the same. In verse 32, rather than disown the prodigal, the father rebuked the older brother for doing so.

15:31. The elder son had not "possessed his possessions." His inheritance had already been set aside for him (v. 31) but he had not availed himself of it. He had not had a party with his friends (v. 29) because he had not asked (James 4:2). If the father honored the request of the prodigal for all that was his, he surely would gladly have given his brother what he asked for

also. He was rich and had been living like a slave. He was **working** to **get** what he **already had!**

This principle is illustrated in Joshua 1:3. While God had already given the entire land of Palestine to Abraham and his descendents, Joshua was only to experience that possession when he claimed it. "**Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, THAT have I given unto you.**" Compare Ephesians 1:3 where God **has** blessed us with **all spiritual blessings** in the heavenlies in Christ -- but until we claim them by faith we will not **enjoy** them.

15:32. "It was meet" is, literally, "It was **necessary**." Notice this erring young man was "lost and is **found**," not "lost and is **saved**". There is a difference between a "lost" dog and a "stray" dog. The former is lost from his home; the latter has no home from which to be lost. The prodigal was not lost from ownership (a "stray") but from fellowship.

THE UNJUST STEWARD (16:1 - 13).

16:8. The lord (not Christ, but the lord -- master -- of the steward) did not commend the steward for his dishonesty (he had either overcharged the customers before, or was cheating his master now). He was commended because he was shrewd enough ("wisely" in the KJV is "shrewdly" in the NASB) to use his present situation to provide for his future welfare. The rich man (vs. 19 - 31) should have used his riches to care for the poor diseased beggar at his gate instead of "living it up." Then he might have had Lazarus as the one welcoming him into the Paradise side of Hades (assuming that such conduct would be the outflow of a believing heart).

Today the believer's stewardship is just for a time -- and **our Lord wants** us to use the gospel He has entrusted to us that other men may be saved (and thus owe God no debt at all). If we do they will be our loving and grateful friends **forever**. The **principle** drawn from the UNfaithfulness of the steward (v. 9) is applied to the **faithfulness** of the believer.

16:9. "Make friends for yourselves by means of the mammon ["riches" -- margin] of unrighteousness that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings" -- NASB. See the note at v. 20 and the note at Matt. 6:23 in Class Notes on Matthew.

16:11. If we are not faithful in how we use our money, how can we be entrusted with a spiritual ministry?

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS (16:14 - 31).

16:14 - 17. Notice that the Pharisees (who were covetous and "fared sumptuously every day" and "heard not the Law" -- vs. 17, 18, 31) are pictured in the rich man. Those who were pressing into the kingdom (v. 16) are represented by Lazarus. The whole story in verses 19 - 31 illustrates verse 15! The **wealth** and the **health** of the rich man were highly esteemed by men -- but not by God (v. 15). The rich man had evidently been justifying himself while Lazarus was justified by God.

16:16. These men would not have to push their way into the kingdom if it were not for the spiritual leaders trying to keep them out! See Luke 11:52.

16:17, 18 and following. The importance of the law is pointed out in relation to this life (v. 18) and the next (v. 31). They may have been careful to emphasize the law on divorce (see Rom. 7:2, 3), but were not heeding it in regard to **eternal** separation. It was the Law that was basic to **both** situations. With this in mind, how can verses 19 - 30 be only a recounting of a **false** view held by the Pharisees, as the Companion Bible suggests? This is a factual story used as a basis for important truth.

16:20. This is **not** a parable! In parables the "certain beggar" would not be named. Also Abraham, who is a real historical character, appears by name in this story.

As has been pointed out, the rich man illustrates the "sinners" of 15:2. The Pharisees were not using their riches to make friends among the sinners (compare 16:9 & context with 16:20, 21); have not given heed to the word of God (16:16, 17, 31); and are warned of the eternal consequences (16:23 - 26).

16:21. Evidently Lazarus had no one to care for him. If he had, they would have dressed his sores and driven the dogs away.

16:22. "The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered: he openeth his eyes, and he is not" (Job 27:19). But Lazarus **was** "gathered" -- into the bosom of Abraham by an angel!

16:24. It does not **say** that Lazarus was a believer, but his presence in Abraham's bosom proves he was. When the rich man wanted someone to persuade his brothers to believe, he asked that Lazarus be sent. Evidently Lazarus was not only a believer, but had been a faithful (though ignored) witness to the rich man.

16:25. See Psa. 73:18, 19.

16:26. "Beside all this." The separation in verse 26 is not based on the fact that one was rich and the other poor (the consideration in verse 25). If it were, Abraham would have been with the rich man instead of with Lazarus -- for he had been a very rich man in his lifetime. It is a different matter, based on their relationship to the word of God (v. 31), which separates them.

Those in "Abraham's Bosom" or "Paradise" before the Cross were separated (sanctified -- as in Hebrews 10:14) from unbelievers who had died. They were separated from the lost because they were justified (their sins **covered**), but were not in Heaven because their sins had not been **taken away** (Heb. 10:4). The price had not yet been paid for their redemption. Once the redemption had been accomplished by Christ, in His death and resurrection, and they were "made perfect," the spirits of these Old Testament saints were transferred to Heaven, as Eph. 4:8 indicates. At present Paradise is located in Heaven, not in Hades, as we see from 2 Cor. 12:2, 4. See Heb. 10:1; 11:39, 40; 12:23 and the note on Matt. 16:18 in Class Notes on Matthew.

16:27, 28. The rich man now has a "missionary vision," but it is too late. "The grave cannot praise Thee ... the living, the living, he shall praise Thee," Isaiah cried in Isa. 38:18, 19. It is not that the dead are unconscious, but that their contact with the living has been terminated. Spiritists cannot really contact the dead, they can only contact demons who impersonate the

dead. What appears to be an exception in 1 Sam. 28:7 - 20 is not an exception at all. It was not the witch of Endor who brought up Samuel from the dead, but God Himself. The witch was accustomed to bringing up demons to impersonate the dead, but when she saw, not a demon, but Samuel himself, she was terrified (1 Sam. 28:12).

16:31. Christ **did** rise from the dead -- and the Pharisees, who would not turn to Him through the word of God, did not turn to Him when He came back from the grave either.

Also, compare the other Lazarus who did return from the dead. As far as the record indicates, he had not one word of warning for anyone. Just the fact that He had returned to life was a powerful testimony (many did believe as a result of the resurrection of Lazarus -- John 11:45) even to the Pharisees (John 11:47, 48; 12:11). But those leaders who had Moses and the prophets, and had not believed them (John 5:46), were not persuaded. Instead they sought to put Lazarus to death again (John 12:10).

E. W. Bullinger, who believed in "soul sleep," taught that Christ was here using a **false** view held by the Pharisees to teach a lesson. Surely Christ would not use a **false** view held by unbelievers, without warning that it was false, to bring the message of verse 31!

It is most instructive to see in the rich man and his brothers the leaders of Israel. They "fared sumptuously every day" but their table became a snare (Rom. 11:9). They had Moses and the prophets (v. 29) but they did not hear them (John 5:39, 46; Rom. 11:8). The afflicted of Israel (represented by Lazarus) sought crumbs that fell from the table, but were not ministered to. Notice, in Luke 10, the priest and Levite passed by on the other side, while a hated Samaritan came and ministered to the wounded Jew -- even as the dogs ministered to Lazarus in verse 21 here. In the case of the leaders of Israel -- three, even before the resurrection of Christ himself, were raised from the dead as a testimony to them. The Lazarus of John eleven was a powerful testimony to them (John 11:47, 48) but they rejected it and sought to put him to death (John 12:10, 11). Christ's resurrection must have been an even more powerful testimony, yet instead of believing they put Stephen to death and committed the sins listed in 1 Thess. 2:15, 16. Like the rich man whose "good things" pertained to this life only, the leaders of Israel received honor from one another (Luke 20:46; John 5:44) but had to leave it all behind when they died.

16:19 - 31 -- A summary. (The word "Hell" is used in the King James Version to translate the Greek word "*Hades*" -- the equivalent of the Hebrew "*Sheol*." This is unfortunate. It confuses Hades/Sheol with the Lake of Fire and fails to distinguish between the two parts of Hades set before us in this chapter. For **convenience only** we will use the word "Hell" for the part of Hades reserved for the lost in the following study. This passage is an effective antidote for many popular **false** conceptions about death. Consider the following:

"Death is the end" -- Both Lazarus and the rich man continued to exist after death.

"Hell (Hades) is merely the grave" -- The rich man was buried, but it was not in his grave that he saw Lazarus, for Lazarus was a beggar and would not have been buried in the costly grave occupied by the rich man. Abraham's grave was far away in the Cave of Machpelah -- reserved for Abraham's immediate family. Verse 26 informs us that there was a great and impassable gulf between Lazarus and the rich man. It would have been no great problem to move the bones of the rich man to where Lazarus was buried. Therefore it is not the bodies of these men which are in view, but their souls.

"The soul goes to purgatory after death" -- This cannot be. The believer (Lazarus) was not in "purgatory" for he was being comforted (v. 25). The unbeliever (the rich man) was

not in purgatory either, though he was in torments (v. 23), for he could not pass over to Abraham's Bosom -- **EVER!** (The great gulf is **fixed** -- v. 23). There was, and is, (aside from heaven itself) no third place for them to be. When believers left their comfort in Abraham's Bosom they were transferred to Heaven (See note at Luke 16:26). When, in the future, the lost leave the torment of "Hell" (Hades) it will not be a delayed trip to Heaven, but an appearance before God to be judged, followed by the eternal torments of the Lake of Fire -- the **true**, and **eternal** "Hell" (Rev. 20:12 - 15). *Send for the author's Bible Study # 30, "The Biblical Doctrine of Hell."*

"At death your soul is transferred to a new-born baby and you begin another life." Neither reincarnation (as described above) nor transmigration (life continued in another form -- whether human, animal or insect) is possible here, for Abraham, who had been dead for centuries, was still Abraham. The rich man and Lazarus still maintain their identities after death.

"The dead are unconscious for 'The dead know not anything'." The doctrine of soul sleep is shown to be false, for both Abraham and the rich man were dead, but conscious. It is mainly to avoid this clear teaching that the passage is misrepresented as a parable. None of Christ's parables are based on false situations. None of them give names to those acting in the parables. While many other Scriptures set forth the conscious condition of the dead, this passage is possibly the clearest.

"We will not know one another in heaven." Not only did the rich man know and recognize Lazarus, but he also knew and recognized a man he had never seen before -- Abraham. While Hades is not Heaven, the believing part of Hades, "Paradise" or "Abraham's Bosom," is now in Heaven (2 Cor. 12:2, 4). It is not conceivable that Abraham's memory was blanked out when he was later transported into the presence of His Lord.

"We can make contact with, and talk to, the dead." The rich man wanted to make contact with his brothers. He evidently knew **he** would not be allowed to do this, so he asked that Lazarus be sent. Lazarus was not allowed to make the contact either. The "gates of Hades" (Matt. 16:18) prevailed against both the lost and saved until Christ was raised from the dead. They still, today, prevail against the lost, but they have been opened wide for the saved -- not so they can contact the living, but to usher them into Heaven to await resurrection. Dead "Saints" can be of no more help to the living than Abraham was to the rich man's brothers.

"The dead can roam around the earth and haunt the living." If contact with the living is not allowed even for such a noble purpose as saving the rich man's brothers from Hell, it is certain it would not be allowed for any other reason. Any "ghost" that has reality (most such manifestations are but deceptions) is but a demon impersonating the dead.

"I will probably be in Hell, but all my friends will be there with me." The implication is that the lost will have a good time visiting with their friends in Hell. The rich man must have had many friends or relatives who, like him, had not paid heed to the word of God and were with him in this place of torment, but they are not mentioned. Evidently he did not find comfort in their presence on his side of the great gulf. Instead, he sought comfort (in vain) from those on the other side. Hell is no party!

"I want to be where my unsaved mother [or father or other loved one] is." If our loved ones are in Hell they do not want us to be there too. It would add immeasurably to their suffering if we arrived there also, and they knew we chose to be in Hell just so we could be with them. The rich man's greatest longing was that his brothers **NOT** be with him.

"The poor go to Heaven and the rich go to Hell." While there was a rich man in

Hell, Abraham, one of the richest men of his day, was not only in the part of Hades reserved for the saved, but the place was named for him -- "Abraham's Bosom." This was not because he was the first person to go there, but because his faith was used as the norm for how to get there, and because he was the father of the Jewish nation to whom Christ was speaking in this story.

"One who is a descendent of Abraham will be accepted by Abraham's God."

This was a popular misconception among the Jews (John 8:33, 39). Here both Lazarus and the rich man were sons of Abraham, but the rich man was in Hell and even Abraham himself could do nothing to help him.

"Riches are an indication of God's favor." Just as the presence of Abraham in Paradise is the assurance that riches did not prevent one from being in that place of blessing, so the presence of a poor beggar there is proof that poverty was not a sign of God's disfavor. The "rich man" in this story was out of favor with God and consigned to Hell.

"There will be another opportunity to be saved after I die." Abraham had no good news for the rich man! The rich man became fully convinced of the reality and importance of spiritual things, but he was not told he could then change his location. He **finally believed**, but it was **too late!**

"Everyone will eventually be saved." The gulf between the rich man and Lazarus was not only great, but it was also **"fixed"** -- it was **permanent**. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the **judgment**" (Heb. 9:27). No second chance after death to be saved, no opportunity for the unbeliever then to change his eternal destination, no comfort, **no hope** -- only **judgment!**

CONCERNING EARNEST SERVICE (17:7 - 10)

17:7, 9. According to the culture of the time, the nature of fallen man, and even the legal requirements of the Law, the tired servant would not be offered a place at the table before the master has eaten, nor even be thanked when he prepares the meal and serves the master. Men were not offered rewards for keeping the Law -- only penalties for breaking it.

However grace, operating in the redeemed heart, is a different matter. I am sure my dear wife would prepare for the servant and seat him at the table -- and then thank him for obeying her instructions later. As a matter of fact I have seen her do it!

The point here is not how we should treat our servants, but how we should respond to our Master. Even if He were as heartless as the master in the story we should not **expect** more (v. 10 -- We cannot demand rewards for doing our duty. In warfare the medals are for those who go **"beyond** the call of duty"). This will make us truly grateful when we find He is far more gracious than my wife (and others like her) could ever be.

How we should rejoice when He is so very gracious, giving rewards for service when He could but command and expect instant obedience! Compare the graciousness Christ actually exhibited when He washed the disciples' feet (John 13:3 - 5) and when He prepared a meal for His disciples who had gone back to fishing for fish instead of for men (John 21:9). See Matt. 20:28. Compare the parable in Luke 12:36, 37. The lord in this parable did not need to reward the performance of duty. However when they were eagerly expecting his coming and preparing for it, beyond the call of duty, he had them recline at the table and he waited on them. Compare 2 Tim. 4:8. Dedication to the **task** is commendable, but inferior to dedication to the **person**. In our relationships with others -- we must be appreciative, but not expect to be appreciated. Compare Luke 17:16 - 19.

17:9. "Trow" (KJV) means to "think."

TEN LEPERS CLEANSED (17 - 19).

17:16. Before, he was unclean and afar off (v. 12). Now he is clean (v. 14), has a testimony (v. 15), and is on his face at Christ's feet giving Him thanks. The nine Jews were cleansed also, but only the hated Samaritan thanked Him. On occasion, at least, the Samaritans are seen to be more responsive to the word of God than the Jews (John 4), more concerned with the welfare of others (Luke 10:30 - 37), and more appreciative of His ministry (this passage).

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING FORETOLD (17:20 - 37).

17:20, 21. It is the kingdom of **GOD**, not the Millennium that is in view here. The coming millennial kingdom (in view in verses 22 - 24) **does** come with observation, and involves events and places (see v. 24). It is external in nature. The Pharisees were inquiring about the millennial kingdom, but He responds in these verses concerning the more important, contemporary, and available, spiritual kingdom of God. They were looking for political changes but ignoring the King in their midst (vs. 22 - 25).

17:24. This "day" is called, in the O.T., the "Day of the LORD [Jehovah]." Therefore this verse is an incidental proof of the deity of Christ. The title "**Son of Man**" (here and in verses 26 and 30) links Christ with the kingdom program and the Coming in **Glory**. The passages using this title cannot refer to the Rapture. This expression is never used in the signed Pauline Epistles and even in Heb. 2:6 it may speak of mankind rather than Christ. It is found in Rev. 1:13; 14:14. It is used 92 times in Ezekiel as a title for Ezekiel himself. It is found in Matthew 32 times -- eight times in chapters 24 and 25. See Dan. 7:13 as a background for the title when applied to Christ.

17:27. There was no awareness of impending doom. It was "business as usual" with no thought that the judgment prophesied by Enoch (Jude 14, 15) and, surely, by Noah (2 Pet. 2:5) was **imminent**. So with Sodom (vs. 28, 29). On that fatal day there was nothing to indicate it would be any different than any other day. But before it was over they were all dead and the city was a smoking ruin.

Notice three English words that sound much alike and are sometimes confused. "**Eminent**" means "standing out so as to be readily perceived or noted; conspicuous ... standing above others in some quality or position." "**Immanent**" means "inherent; specifically, having existence or effect only within the mind or consciousness." "**Imminent**" -- the word used here -- means "**Ready to take place** ... hanging threateningly over one's head." It is the third word, "**Imminent**," which describes the **Rapture**.

17:31, 32. The access to the flat housetop was on the outside of the house (See Acts 10:9). He is to flee directly from the roof. Lot's wife is used as an illustration and warning (v. 32). She hesitated just long enough to look back, and was destroyed. This emphasizes the suddenness of the coming of the Day of the Son of Man, as verses 27, 28 highlight its unexpectedness.

17:34 - 37. Compare Matt. 24:37 - 41. The question of whether those "taken" are believers rescued from judgment (as in the Rapture) or unbelievers taken in judgment is surely answered in verse 37. The disciples were asking, "**Where** will they be 'taken'?" The answer surely doesn't sound like, "To Heaven"! "Eagles" is translated "vultures" in the NASB. So they will be "taken" in **death**. Compare Rev. 19:17, 18.

PARABLES ON PRAYER -- including the Pharisee & publican in the temple (18:1 - 14).

18:4 - 8. God will answer -- not for the same reason as the unjust judge, but because He is **God** and **does** have a loving regard for man. Contrast "speedily" in verse 8 with "would not for a while" in verse 4.

18:8. This will take place when Christ comes in judgment -- to avenge His elect (v. 7).

18:9. The ultimate alternative to trusting in the **Lord** is trusting in **yourself**. The Pharisee not only trusted in himself, he also prayed with himself (v. 11), and exalted himself (v. 14). He indeed had "his **own** religion." He missed being justified by God. As in Prov. 30:12, he was pure in his own eyes, but not washed from his filthiness. He missed the better righteousness required in Matt. 6:33. Like most of his nation, he was seeking righteousness by the works of the Law rather than by faith (Rom. 9:32). He had zeal, but was ignorant of God's righteousness and was going about seeking to establish his own righteousness (Rom. 10:2, 3). Like most of his nation in Paul's day, he was **lost!** (Rom. 10:1).

18:9 - 14. The Pharisee trusted in **himself**, prayed with **himself**, justified **himself** (vs. 11,12), and exalted **himself** (v. 14). Like Paul (though, unlike the Pharisees, Paul was a believer) in Romans 7:15 - 24, the Pharisee had a bad case of "**I**" trouble. The Publican trusted in **God**, prayed to **God**, was justified by **God** (v. 14), and will be exalted by **God** (v. 14).

18:13. "God be merciful to me a sinner" is "God be **propitious** to me a sinner" in the Greek text. It was equivalent to saying, "God, when you look at me remember the blood on the Mercy Seat [place of propitiation]!" We do not need to ask God to be merciful today, for He has already been merciful at the Cross. We are not waiting for God to do something -- He has already finished the work of redemption and is **waiting for US to believe**. Many have been saved when praying the "publican's prayer," for God looks at the heart, not the head. He sees their faith, and does not allow their lack of knowledge to interfere with His saving work. However the preacher or personal worker should know better than to use this prayer, as it is in the KJV, for salvation today. The more accurate we are in presenting the way of salvation, the easier it is to bring others to true faith in Christ, and assurance of salvation.

ZACCCHAEUS (19:1 - 10)

19:6, 7. "Half of my possessions I **will** give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I **will** give back four times as much" (NASB). He was not boasting of what he had done, but evidencing a change of heart for the future.

19:10. The lost here are the lost of **Israel**. See verse nine and Matt. 15:24. Praise His name, He seeks and saves the lost Gentiles also in this day of Grace!

THE "OLIVET DISCOURSE" -- compared to the account in Matthew (21:5 - 38).

21:6 - 23. In "Antiquities of the Jews" by Josephus (Whiston translation) XX, VI, 1 – we have this footnote by Whiston. *"Our Savior had foretold that the Jews' rejection of His gospel would bring upon them, among other miseries, these three, which they themselves here [upon the occasion of a dispute between the Jews and the Samaritans] shew they expected would be the consequences of their present tumults and seditions -- the utter subversion of their country, the conflagration of their temple, and the slavery of themselves, their wives, and children."* The description by Josephus of the siege, and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, is terrifying. The events described by him were a literal fulfillment of what Christ had prophesied.

21:12 - 15. Paul experienced this. Acts 24:25; 26:26 - 29; Phil. 1:12, 13; 2 Tim. 4:16, 17.

21:18. "Perish" in this verse is not physical death, in spite of the reference to hairs of their head, for some will be put to death physically.

21:20. This passage has the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 a.d. in view. Compare Matt. 24:15, & following, where the mid-Tribulation events are in view. Notice the differences in these two accounts. See the Scofield notes on this verse and the notes on Matt. 24:16 in Class Notes on Matthew. Both Matthew 24 and Luke 21 may refer to the same sermon, but the Holy Spirit sees fit for Matthew to report that portion dealing with the Tribulation crisis while Luke is given the task of recalling what Christ said about the coming destruction of Jerusalem in their own day. Notice some of the differences:

<u>Matthew</u>	<u>Luke</u>
The disciples' question includes a request concerning "the end of the age."	The disciples question does not include this request.
They are to flee when they see the "abomination of desolation in the temple."	They are to flee when they see the city surrounded by armies.
They will experience "great tribulation" and (according to Rev. 12:14) they will	They will be led away captive into all nations until the times of
the Gentiles	
be gathered out of all nations into the wilderness where they will be protected by God for 3 1/2 years. Compare Ezek. 20:34 - 44.	be fulfilled.

21:21. "The whole body, of the church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by a divine revelation ... removed from the city, and dwelt at a certain place beyond the Jordan, called Pella." -- Eusebius Pamphilus, Bishop of Caesarea (265 - 339 a.d.): cited in "Israel My Glory" magazine for April / May 1989, page 23.

21:22. This goes beyond the destruction in 70 a.d. If verses 20, 21 are depicting the destruction under Titus at that time (as seems certain from verse 24) then the events of 70 a.d. are a part of the "Day of vengeance of our God" which culminates in the battle of Armageddon and the return of Christ in glory. This Age of Grace is an unprophesied interruption of that day, pushing the actual carrying out of most of the vengeance into the future.

21:24. See Daniel chapters 2 - 7 for a prophetic history of the Times of the Gentiles" (with this unprophesied Age of Grace omitted). This period began with the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of Judah in the Old Testament, and will continue until Christ comes again as King of kings -- to restore the kingdom to Israel, and reign over all the earth.

Nathan told David, "I will establish the throne of thy kingdom forever" (2 Sam. 7:13). See 1 Kings 2:4; 8:25; 9:5; 2 Chron. 6:16; 7:18. Several times it looked like this promise would fail. For instance, in the days of Joash, it hung on the life of a baby, and the king following Hezekiah wouldn't even have existed except for the extra 15 years of life granted to him (2 Kings 21:1). During the Times of the Gentiles, up until Christ came on the scene, there was no lack of a man to sit on the throne, but the throne had been withdrawn.

The Times of the Gentiles has continued for a long time (almost 2,500 years already), with no king for Israel. Luke 21:24 bridges the time from 70 a.d. to the Tribulation period, which is under consideration in the following verses. When the throne is reinstated, Christ will sit on it. This Age of Grace is an **unprophesied part** of the Times of the Gentiles, as Romans 13:1 - 7 indicates. The leading characteristic of the Times of the Gentiles is that authority to rule the world has been given to Gentile powers. The "powers" of Rom. 13:1 are Gentile powers. Compare Rev. 11:2.

21:25. "Perplexity" literally means "no way out" according to Fred V. Kinzie (my late uncle on my mother's side).

21:28. Compare Acts 1:11. The "things" spoken of in this verse include the signs of verses 25, 26. Compare verses 31, 36.

21:32. "This generation shall not [**MAY** not" -- the Greek particle indicates a condition must be fulfilled] pass away." -- Charles Baker, A Dispensational Theology, page 528. See 3:18 - 21. The condition was the acceptance of the risen Christ by Israel. It was not fulfilled (Acts 7), and as a result this age of grace was inserted and that generation did pass away.

21:34. "Unawares" is only found here and in 1 Thess. 5:3, where it is translated "sudden."

21:36. Are those counted worthy to escape, the 144,000 (Rev. 7:4 - 8)? They do escape, for they are sealed in their foreheads to protect them (Rev. 7:3, 4). They "stand before the Son of Man" in the sense that the prophets stood before the Lord, ministering the prophetic office.

-- Or does this verse refer to the remnant during the Tribulation who "endure to the end" (Matt. 24:13), are not purged out as rebels (Ezek. 20:38 and context), and are present when they see Him whom they have pierced -- and are saved (Zech. 12:6 - 12)?

PILATE SENDS JESUS TO HEROD (23:6 - 12).

23:2. "Forbidding to give tribute to Caesar -." This was an outright lie. Pilate must have **known** they were lying. See 20:25; 23:4, 14, 15, 22.

23:11. "Set Him at nought" (KJV) is one word in the Greek -- the same word translated "despise" in 1 Thess. 5:20. It is used in Acts 4:11 also.

23:12. Rejecting Christ makes strange bedfellows! The Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians -- always fighting one another -- were together in their rejection of Christ. Barabbas was befriended by his former victims in their mutual hatred for Christ. The Jewish leaders who detested Rome had a sudden burst of patriotism in their zeal to slay the Son of God (John 19:15).

DETAILS ON THE REPENTANT THIEF (23:39 - 43).

23:40. What an illustration we have of Romans 5:16, "While we were still **helpless** ... Christ died for the **ungodly**" (NASB). At the very time Christ was dying, this ungodly thief was completely helpless. The Law could not help him -- it had decreed the death penalty on sin. His companion could not help him -- he was in the same fix. He could not help himself -- both hands and feet were nailed down. But, though he probably didn't realize it, Christ was dying **for him** -- which was his only hope.

23:40 - 43. In this brief portion is revealed the amazing extent of this man's faith. He believed that: **1.** He, himself, was guilty and deserved death. **2.** Christ was innocent. **3.** Christ would be raised from the dead ("when," not "if," in verse 42). **4.** Christ (in resurrection, obviously) would be King, evidently the King promised in the Old Testament. He addressed Him as "Lord." **5.** He, himself, would be raised from the dead and be able to have a relationship to that kingdom. **6.** Christ was the One on whom that relationship depended. **7.** That relationship did not depend on his works (his past works were evil, and now he is nailed down -- hands and feet -- and can do **nothing**). **8.** His salvation did not depend on "turning over a new leaf" or "doing better tomorrow" for this was his last leaf and tomorrow he would be **dead**.

In light of all this he received the assurance, from the lips of Christ Himself, that he would be in Paradise that very day! The idea that verse 43 should be punctuated, "I say unto thee today, 'Thou shalt be with me in Paradise'" is ridiculous. What he needed to know was not when he was hearing Christ speak (that was quite obvious), but when he would be in Paradise!

23:41. This man said about the same thing that was expressed by Pilate and Herod, but the thief really believed it and made it the basis for his course of action. Herod said, "He is innocent," but mocked Him; Pilate said, "He is innocent," and crucified Him; the thief said, "He is innocent," and trusted Him for salvation.

THE TWO DISCIPLES ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS (24:13 - 35).

SEE APPENDIX # 2

24:11. At least they were not gullible -- they had to be shown. Compare John 20:25. . "The word ['Idle talk' (KJV) or 'nonsense' (NASB)] is applied in medical language to the wild talk of the sick in delirium." -- Geldenhuys in "The New International Commentary of the New Testament," published by Eerdmans, page 626.

24:15. "Communed" (KJV) is the Greek word *homilein*, from *homileo* (from which we get our word "homiletics"). It means, "to converse; commune; talk."

"Reasoned" (KJV) is *sodzatein* (the "ei" has the long "a" sound). It means, "to discuss; contravert, dispute with; inquire; question with; reason together." -- From Strong's Concordance. It is used in Mark 12:28 of the Pharisees disputing with Christ. In the noun form it is found in Acts 28:29 -- "great reasoning" or "great dispute" (NASB margin). It seems these disciples were having an argument.

Their "reasoning" left them sad and discouraged. The word of God, later, caused their hearts to burn within them for joy.

24:18. They thought **He** was ignorant of the **crucifixion** -- but **they** were ignorant of the **resurrection**.

24:21. The span of three days, which seemed to make the situation hopeless, was the very span of time which signaled the resurrection! Do we complain, "so many years have gone by and He still has not returned!?" Compare 2 Pet. 3:14. Those very years bring His coming closer (Rom. 13:11). The lateness of the time should not discourage us -- it should thrill us with an ever growing expectancy; put us on tip-toe, with our eyes on the skies from where also we wait for the Savior (Phil. 3:20). His coming is over 1,900 years nearer than it was when Paul wrote of it, longed for it, and called it the "blessed hope."

24:27. These disciples had heard testimony that Christ was risen from the dead (v. 23) but they didn't believe it because they didn't **see** Him (v. 24). It is significant that Christ did not try to prove His resurrection by saying, "Look at me! Here I am!" Instead He turned their eyes to the Scriptures. Later they did see Him (with **recognition**). So, today, we cannot see Him physically -- but we have the **Scriptures**. Later we, too, will see Him with our eyes. Meanwhile our hearts can burn within us as we see Him in the **Word**.

24:29 - 35. What wonderful fellowship they enjoyed along the way. No wonder they wanted Him to abide (remain) with them. Incidentally, Christ will not force His way into the home. He waits to be invited. He entered the home, but at the very climax of their fellowship He broke it off (He vanished) -- that they might turn from **fellowship with Him** to **witness for Him**. However they found that fellowship with him continued and intensified as they testified to others (v. 36).

24:31. "They knew **Him**" -- that is, they knew He was the One they had walked and talked with before the Cross. See "**Himself**" in verses 15 and 36 and "**myself**" in verse 39. The "Himself" not only suggests "Jesus, not someone else," but also "Jesus in a physical body, not a spirit or a vision" (vs. 37, 39). When they "believed not for joy" ("too good to be true") He demonstrated that He had been raised from the dead **physically** by eating some very ordinary and physical food (vs. 42, 43). If His resurrection had not been physical, then what they had

"**supposed**" in verse 37 would have been the **truth**.

24:33. If Matthias was one of "them that were with them" then Paul could look back on this occasion, after Matthias had become an apostle, and say, as he did in 1 Cor. 15:5, "the twelve" were there. In the same way we can look at an old picture of a small boy and say, "That's my father" -- even though at the time the picture was taken he was much too young to have a son. The twelve could not have included either Judas, who was dead by this time, or Paul, who was still a staunch and zealous unbeliever. It had to be Matthias who was the twelfth apostle. It was necessary that the one taking the place of Judas be present at this time (Acts 1:22; 13:31). "The twelve" is not just "a collective term" -- as is suggested in the Scofield note at Mark 16:14.

24:33. These two disciples had already walked seven miles that day (v. 7). It was toward evening and the day was nearly over (v. 29 NASB), but, late though it was, and tired as they must have been, they immediately began the seven mile walk back. With the joy they had in their hearts, and the good news they longed to share, the distance, the darkness, and the fatigue meant nothing. So it should be with us as we share the Good News of His grace with those around the neighborhood -- and around the world.

24:34. How very gracious of our Lord to appear specially to Peter, in view of his having denied Him three times -- with cursing and swearing. Peter was heartbroken, discouraged and, no doubt, despondent. He needed the assurance that he was still loved and accepted. Later Christ had a very gracious talk with him about his continuing place as an apostle -- a recommissioning (John 21:15 - 22). He went on to be the leader of the apostolic group and finally laid down his life as a martyr for His Lord.

APPENDIX # 1 (See Luke, chapters one and two and Matthew, chapters one and two)

The ORDER OF EVENTS at the time of the INCARNATION

"Christmas cards" often show a manger scene, complete with both shepherds and Wise Men. The idea that both groups were there at the same time clouds a clear understanding of the events recorded in Matthew and Luke regarding the birth of Christ. From Matt. 1:18 -- 2:23 and Luke 1:5 -- 2:52 we can reconstruct the following scenario in the drama of the incarnation.

Nine months before Christ was born, His birth was announced to Mary by Gabriel, and the conception took place (Luke 1:26 - 38). She evidently went at once to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, who, according to the message of Gabriel, was six months pregnant. She stayed there about three months -- probably until she had been able to help Elizabeth through the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 2:56, 57).

After Mary returned to Galilee her pregnancy was discovered. Joseph was reassured, and instructed by an angel to take Mary as his wife, but he did not have a sexual relationship with her until after Christ was born (Matt. 1:18 - 25).

A few days before Mary was ready to deliver her child, a decree from Caesar forced Joseph and Mary to travel to Bethlehem, where Christ was born (Luke 2:1 - 7).

The night of the birth, evidently, the shepherds were notified and made their way to the

manger where the baby had been placed. They found a **baby** (the Greek word *brepheos*), not a **young child** (Greek word *paidion*) as in Matthew. He was housed in a **stable** (Luke 2:8 - 20), not a **house** as when the Wise Men arrived (Matt. 2:8, 11). The sign to the shepherds was "you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger" (Luke 2:12 NASB) -- not a star, the sign to the Wise Men later.

Eight days later Joseph and Mary were still in Bethlehem where Christ was circumcised (Lev. 12:2, 3; Luke 2:21).

Forty days after the birth took place (seven plus thirty three -- Lev. 12:2, 4), Mary took Christ to the Temple in Jerusalem where she offered the sacrifice demanded by the Law. Since she offered two birds instead of a lamb, Joseph and Mary were very poor (Lev. 12:8). If they had received the gold, frankincense and myrrh before this they would have had sufficient funds on hand to buy the lamb!

At this time we have the adoration and prophecy of Simeon and the adoration of Anna (Luke 2:25 - 38).

Right after the trip to the Temple they returned to Nazareth. Notice the clear wording of Luke 2:39, "And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord [in the Temple], they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth." They did not go to Egypt at this time, and there had been no time previously for a trip to Egypt and back -- it had only been forty days!

About a year after Christ's birth there was evidently a second trip to Jerusalem. We are told in Luke 2:41 that they went there every year for the Passover, and poor families would not make extra trips unless forced to it by circumstances. With Jerusalem very crowded at the time of the Passover, they would most naturally stay with relatives or friends in Joseph's city, Bethlehem, which was within walking distance of Jerusalem (about seven miles). With this visit expected by the friend or relative, and planned for, there would be no need for the emergency housing required earlier.

Evidently during Passover week (for Joseph and Mary were still in Bethlehem), the Wise Men arrived in crowded Jerusalem looking for the King who "**has been**" (NASB) born. The Wise Men knew (as Herod assumed) that the star appeared **at His birth**, not in anticipation of it. This is why Herod inquired so carefully how long it had been since they first saw the star (Matt. 2:7). Since, on the basis of this information, Herod had all the boy babies two years old and younger slain, the time given must have been in the neighborhood of one year. This would give him a margin of error -- one year each way -- to make sure Christ was among the number killed.

When the Wise Men arrived they found a **young child**, not a **baby**, and he was in a **house**, not in a **stable** (Matt. 2:11). They presented their rich gifts to Him. Quite clearly these riches were not used to buy a lamb to sacrifice, but were needed to finance a trip to Egypt and a prolonged stay there. A family too poor to buy a lamb would not have the funds -- at a moment's notice -- for such a journey! The Wise Men returned home, but not through Jerusalem (Matt. 2:12).

The warning from the angel must have come to Joseph immediately after the departure of the Wise Men, for they needed to be on their way at once. They could not stop over in Jerusalem at this time, to give place for the events recorded in Luke 2:22 - 36, for Jerusalem was **north** of Bethlehem, and Egypt was **south**. Jerusalem was the last place in the world they would want to go in this desperate situation. They made their way at once to Egypt (Matt. 2:13 - 15).

The male children were slain in Bethlehem (one-year-olds, plus or minus one year). (Matt. 2:16 - 18).

The little family returned from Egypt to Nazareth, avoiding Jerusalem (Matt. 2:19 - 23).

Now (not after Luke 2:39, as the Scofield heading indicates) came the "silent years." The events related in Matt. 2:1 - 23 all took place **after** the first return to Nazareth in Luke 2:39. Scripture is silent about Christ's life from the **second** return to Nazareth, this time from Egypt, until Christ began His ministry -- except for the brief record of the visit to Jerusalem when Christ was twelve (Luke 2:42 - 52). We do know some things about these years however. During this part of His life He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). Also, as during His ministry later, He did not sin (Heb. 7:26; John 8:29).

During this time Mary had other children -- by Joseph. They were only half brothers and sisters to Christ, for God, not Joseph, was His Father. Matt. 1:25 indicates that Mary was a virgin only "until she gave birth to a son" (NASB). He had four brothers (James, Joseph, Simon and Judas [Jude]), and at least two sisters (Matt. 13:55, 56). They were not merely "relatives," or children of Joseph by a former marriage, for in Psa. 69:8, 9, a messianic Psalm, it says, "I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto **my mother's children**. For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of those who reproached thee are fallen upon me." The ninth verse is quoted in John 2:17 as prophetic of Christ cleansing the Temple. The link in thought between verse eight and verse nine proves that it is **Christ** speaking when He says, "**my mother's children**."

Another passage in Psalms may be speaking of Christ. "Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence. Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself" (Psa. 50:20, 21). His brothers did not believe on Him (John 7:5) and probably thought He was a son of both Joseph and Mary, as they were. Since genealogical records and references are consistently through the father, the fact that both of the above passages approach it through the mother is significant. The virgin birth of Christ is in view, of course.

That Mary was a virgin when Christ was born puts a guard around the truth that He was God made man. That Mary had other children after Christ was born exalts the dignity and purity of the husband and wife relationship in the home. See the article "Did Mary have other children?" in "Help in Hard Places" -- by W. P. Heath (available from William P Heath as a separate Bible Study, Study # 54).

Appendix # 2 (See Luke chapter 24)

A KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES

Many years ago brother Percy Stoute called my attention to at least seven items that were opened in the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke. The chapter begins with an opened tomb, from which the risen Christ came forth, and closes with the heavens opened to receive Him back to glory. In between, Christ opened the Scriptures to the two disciples (vs. 27, 32), then their eyes (v. 31) and their understanding (v. 45). They, in turn, opened their home to Him (v. 29) and then their mouths in testimony for Him (v. 35). Most appropriately, in the heart of this chapter of openings, Christ used a key -- a **key** we need, and must use, today also.

Cleopas and, probably, his wife, Mary (John 19:25 -- the masculine of "fools" in v. 25 would be used even if one of them was a woman), were debating with one another as they walked home ("reasoned" in v. 15). They were sad (v. 17), disillusioned (v. 21 where "trusted" is in the past tense), and discouraged ("It is the third day!"). Thinking Him to be ignorant of the crucifixion, they themselves were ignorant of the resurrection. They had neglected the prophecies of the resurrection, both in the Old Testament and by Christ Himself, and had not even believed the testimony of the women who had **seen** Him.

In meeting the pitiful condition of these two saints, He used a **key**. It opened the Scriptures to them and opened their understanding to those Scriptures, causing their sad hearts to burn within them for joy.

The "key" is found in verses 25 through 27. It is like an old fashioned key with three projections -- "tangs" -- to operate the mechanism.

The **first tang** of this key is found in verse 25. "Then said He unto them, 'O fools, and slow of heart to believe **all** that the prophets have spoken -.'" If the word of God was to be opened up to them, they had to believe it -- **ALL** of it.

In Mark 9:9, 10, Christ had plainly referred to His coming resurrection, but "they kept ... questioning one another what rising from the dead should mean." They should have believed what He said instead of trying to "interpret" it. How often the question, "What does it mean?" can be answered by another question -- "What does it say?" -- as we ourselves read the word of God. Complete faith in the total written revelation from God is the very foundation for all accurate biblical interpretation.

This believing approach poses many problems to the careful and honest student however. There are many Scriptures which seem so contradictory that it appears necessary to choose one and either ignore, explain away, or downright reject the other. For instance, Gen. 1:30 and 2:16 indicate a totally vegetarian diet, while Gen. 9:3 allows men to eat "every moving thing which liveth"; the Law of Moses carefully limits the eating of meats to "clean" animals; 1 Tim. 4:3 - 5 reveals that nothing is unclean of itself, but all is to be received with thanksgiving; and, in the future Tribulation period, Jews are to be judged because they eat pork and mice (Isa. 66:17). How can we believe it **ALL**? Yet the word of God will remain largely a closed book until we **do** believe it all.

It is this paradox which makes it necessary to give heed to the **second tang** of the key. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? (v. 26).

This question struck at the very heart of their problem. They had failed to distinguish between the first coming of Christ and His Second Coming. While the Old Testament nowhere specifically refers to the "first coming" or the "second coming," or even to two advents, they should have realized there had to be two from the contrasting descriptions given of the coming One. Facing the prophecies of His sufferings and death on the one hand, and those speaking of His power and glory on the other, they had chosen the passages they preferred and ignored, explained away, or rejected the others.

Redemption is both by the payment of a price and by the exercise of power. In the exodus the price paid was the blood of the Passover lamb: the power was displayed at the Red Sea. The book of Ruth tells of a kinsman redeemer who can and does pay the price of redemption: in the book of Esther Israel is redeemed by a display of Power. Compare the suffering Messiah in Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 with the triumphant Warrior-King in Isaiah 63:1 - 6. There are many such contrasts in the Old Testament.

Christ had begun His ministry (Luke 4:17 - 21) by making this very distinction. As He

read from Isa. 61:1, 2, He revealed a clear break between His first advent and His second, even though it necessitated making that division in the middle of a sentence! Near the close of His ministry, here in Luke 24, He gently rebuked the two disciples for failing to recognize this distinction.

In between these two passages of Luke the leaders of Israel made the same mistake. They were looking for a Messiah who would display His power in delivering them from the Roman yoke. They even tried, on one occasion, to force Him to be their King (John 6:15). They did not understand the necessity for a suffering and dying sacrifice and, since He would not be their King, they rejected Him. In terms of the Old Testament typology, they wanted the Red Sea crossing without the Passover lamb. Because they missed the contrast between the "acceptable year of the Lord" and "the day of vengeance of our God" they missed that national salvation described in Isa. 61 (the last part of verse two and verse three). Compare Zech. 12:10 and Matt. 5:4. Their messianic hope had been put off into the future because of their unbelief. They failed to rightly divide their Old Testament and it led them to reject the Savior.

The second tang of the key, then, is to **rightly divide the word of God**, to study it dispensationally. Only then can we quite literally believe it **ALL**. Only then will the religiously lost be robbed of their "biblical" excuses for their unbelief. Only then will believers experience the joy that Paul says should be theirs.

But to stop there is to leave us intellectually enlightened, and possibly quite proud of it, but unsatisfied of heart. There is a **third tang** to the key.

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in **all** the Scriptures the things concerning **Himself** (v. 27).

At first thought one could wish we had the message in full which is described here. But no -- for, though He drew His comments from all the Scriptures, He did not have time to exhaust the topic, nor to refer to all of the verses. If we could have His remarks at this point written down in full we might well assume only the passages He used were truly messianic. As it is we can read every chapter asking ourselves, "How do **these** verses speak of Christ?"

The Old Testament is full of Christ. There are men who are types: Adam, Isaac, Joseph, Boaz, David, and Jonah -- to name but a few. The Tabernacle and the sacrificial system are full of glorious glimpses of the Savior. There are specific prophecies concerning the coming One, in addition to the messianic Psalms. There are incidental references to Him, such as the fourth person in the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:24, 25). The appearances of the "Angel of the Lord" are evidently pre-incarnation appearances of Christ. In fact (in light of John 1:18; Col. 1:15; 2 Cor. 4:6; Heb. 1:3; etc.) every Theophany (appearance of God) is a Christophany (appearance of Christ).

It is not enough to know typology, prophecy, or even Christology -- we must know **HIM!** It is not enough, today, to "know the mystery" which was revealed to Paul concerning this Age of Grace, as important as that is. Paul, above all others, knew the mystery -- yet he cried out, "That I may know **Him!**" (Phil. 3:10). It is not enough to preach the mystery, though preach it we must. Paul tells us it is "the preaching of Jesus Christ" which establishes believers in the faith (Rom. 16:25). Yes, it is "the preaching of Jesus Christ **according to the revelation of the mystery**" (here is where the second tang of the key comes in), but it is the preaching of **CHRIST**. Notice the emphasis in Luke 24 on Christ Himself (verses 15, 27, 36, 44 and 45). Every tang of a key must be in place if it is to work.

Important as dispensational distinctions are today, the time will come when the historical aspect of the dispensations will have run their course. Then, in the fullness of time, all things will

be gathered in one -- in Christ (Eph. 1:10). While the distinctions between Body and bride, a heavenly people and an earthly people, etc. will abide, it will be evident that even as Christ is the heart of the written word of God, so He is the ultimate goal of all of God's varied programs. In our physical experience the distinction between man and woman is not lost when they become one in marriage. The reason for the differences is seen most clearly, and appreciated most highly, when they are seen to complement one another -- as they are, in marriage, "gathered in one."

These three parts of the key bear a relationship to the three general gifts which remain in the church today -- Faith, Hope and Love (1 Cor. 13:13).

<u>Verse 27</u>	<u>Verse 25</u>	<u>Verse 26</u>	-
LOVE	FAITH	HOPE	
The "word of God" is something to be believed.	The "word of God" is something to be studied.	The "Word of God" is something to be loved.	
The Scriptures were opened to see (v. 32). 31).	Their understanding was opened (v. 45).	Their eyes were opened to Him (v. 31).	
The answer to fear loneliness. (Psa. 56:3, 4).	The answer to confusion.	The answer to	
To know life. (Phil. 3:10).	To know doctrine.	To know Him	
The foundation of the house.	The house built on the foundation.	The Occupant of the house.	

One final word. A key is of no value unless it is used. The very proof of a key is that it works. We need to get beyond admiring the key, arguing for the validity of the key, and defending the key -- important as these things may be. We need to apply it to the whole Word of God and find that it does, indeed, open it up both to our heads and our hearts. We need to experience the burning heart -- whether we are reading Romans or Genesis, Isaiah or Ephesians. We **can** -- if we believe it all, rightly divide it, and see our beloved Lord as its all consuming theme.