

**1:3-4**      **Who is Theophilus to whom Luke addressed this gospel account?**

Scriptures do not record who Theophilus is – his name means “one who loves God”. Some think that the name refers to *the Christian reader*, but the general consensus among Bible commentators is that Theophilus was a Roman official. Though Luke addressed his gospel to Theophilus as an individual, it is intended to give all believers the assurance that christianity is not just another religion, but that it is founded in God’s eternal purpose upon His Son, Jesus, who has redeemed all men unto Himself by His propitiatory death on the cross (CP Jn 1:29; 1Jn 2:2). Luke also addressed his record of the Acts of the Apostles to Theophilus (CP Ac 1:1).

**1:13-15**      **Was John baptized in the spirit from his mother’s womb?**

John was filled with, but not baptized in, the Holy Spirit. The baptism in the Spirit was not given until the day of Pentecost (CP Joel 2:28-29; Lu 24:49; Jn 7:37-39; Ac 1:1-8; 2:1-4, 16-18). Jesus baptizes believers in the Holy Spirit (CP Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8).

**1:26-38**      **Why was Zacharias punished for questioning the angel, but not Mary?**

(CP V5-15). Zacharias had prayed for a child, yet when God sent the angel to tell him that he and Elizabeth would have one, Zacharias did not believe it (CP V18-20). Zacharias doubted God and asked for a sign of fulfillment. The sign itself became a punishment – Zacharias was struck dumb. Mary’s was a question of information, not of unbelief. Mary simply wondered of Gabriel how she, a virgin, could give birth to a baby (CP V34-37). Mary unreservedly accepted what Gabriel told her (CP V38). Regardless of being an unmarried virgin, Mary completely and wholeheartedly accepted what God had purposed for her. She submitted herself completely to God’s will (CP V46-49).

**1:35**      **(A) How can Jesus be both Son of God and Son of Man?**

The terms *Son of God* and *Son of Man* are interchangeable. They both refer to Jesus. *Son of God* expresses His deity (CP Mt 1:18-25; 3:13-17; 16:13-16; 17:1-9; Php 2:5-11). *Son of Man* expresses Jesus’ humanity and servanthood (CP Psa 2:7; Mt 12:15-21; 20:28; Lu 2:11; Jn 1:14).

**1:35**      **(B) Did Jesus become the Son of God by His incarnation or was He eternally the Son?**

Most Christians believe that Jesus was eternally the Son of God. The argument against this however is that Jesus could not eternally be the Son of God because eternity is timeless – it has no beginning or end, whereas Jesus, as man, and as the Son of God, did have a beginning. He was brought into being; begotten of God (CP Gen 49:10; Nu 24:17; Psa 2:7; Isa 7:14; 9:6-7; Mt 1:18-25; Lu 1:26-35; 2:11; Jn 1:14; Ga 4:4; Php 2:5-8; He 1:5-6; 5:5). But before He took on human form at His incarnation, the person

we now know as Jesus Christ had no beginning. He was not begotten; He did not come into being; He was not the Son of God – He was God (CP Nu 21:4-9 with 1Cor 10:9; Psa 45:6-7; Isa 6:1-5 with Jn 12:37-41; Mic 5:2; Jn 1:1-2; 3:13; 8:56-58; 17:5; Ac 20:28; Ro 9:5; Php 2:5-8; Col 2:8-10; 1Ti 3:16; Tit 2:13; He 1:8-12; 2Pe 1:1-2; 1Jn 1:1-2; 3:16; Rev 1:8, 11, 17-18; 2:8; 3:14; 21:6; 22:13). Every one of these scriptures teach that the pre-incarnate Jesus always existed as God. He was an equal member of the Godhead from all eternity (CP Isa 52:12). Jesus was a spirit being and carried out the divine plan of creation (CP Psa 90:2; 102:25-27; Jn 1:3, 10; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16-17; He 1:2, 10-12; 11:3; Rev 3:14).

Jesus is also seen in His pre-incarnate state many times in the Old Testament as the Angel of the Lord. In most of the Old Testament scriptures the Angel of (from) the Lord (Jehovah) is regarded as deity, yet is distinguished from Jehovah. The Angel of Jehovah is one person in the Godhead, and Jehovah who sent Him, is another. As the Angel of the Lord, the pre-incarnate Jesus spoke to Hagar, Sarah’s handmaid, after Sarah dismissed her and later cast her out altogether (CP Gen 16:7-13; 21:17-18). He was one of the three angels who visited Abraham, and rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah (CP 18:1-5, 9-22; 19:24). He wrestled with Jacob (CP 32:24-30 with Hos 12:2-5). He spoke to Moses out of the burning bush (CP Ex 3:1-14 with Lu 20:37; Ac 7:30-38). He was the pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night that guided the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan (CP Ex 13:21-22 with 14:19-20, 24). He stood in the way of Balaam, and made his donkey speak (CP Nu 22:22-35, 38). He was the captain of the host of the Lord who instructed Joshua how to destroy Jericho (CP Josh 5:13-6:5). He told Gideon how He would use him to free the Israelites from the Midianites who had kept them in servitude for seven years (CP Judg 6:11-24). He was the fourth man King Nebuchadnezzar saw walking through the flames in the furnace with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (CP Dan 3:8-28). V25 should read “...and the form of the fourth is like a Son of the Gods,” not “and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God” as the KJV renders it. Nebuchadnezzar had no knowledge of the New Testament revelation of the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary. He acknowledged in V28 that the being he saw in V25 was the Angel of the Lord – angels are sometimes referred to as Sons of God in the Old Testament (CP Gen 6:1-4; Job 1:6; 38:7). In all those scriptures the Angel of the Lord (Jehovah) is regarded as deity, yet is distinguished from Jehovah, which proves He was an equal member of the Godhead.

Jesus was also the rider of the red horse standing among the myrtle trees who spoke to Zechariah near the close of the Old Testament (CP Zech 1:7-21; 2:1-13; 3:1-10; 4:5-6; 13:1-7).

In Zech 1:7-21 Jesus is called the Angel of the Lord. In 1:7-21 and 2:1-13 both He and the Lord of Hosts are called Lord. In 1:11 other angels reported to Him (CP 1:11). In 1:14-17 He spoke as God (CP 1:14-17). In 2:3-5 He called Himself Lord (CP 2:3-5). In 3:1-2 He rebuked Satan (CP 3:1-2). In 3:3-8 He gave commands to others as God and used such terms with

Joshua and His fellow-priests when referring to the way of God as **my** way; to an ordinance of God as **my** charge; to the household of God as **my** house; to God's courts as **my** courts; to God's servant, the branch – referring to Himself as Messiah – as **my** servant, the branch (CP 3:3-8). In 3:9-10 and 4:5-6 He called Himself the Lord of hosts (CP 3:9-10; 4:5-6). In 13:7 the Lord of hosts called Him *my fellow*, which means fellow-God, co-equal (CP 13:7). Jesus was a fellow-God, co-equal with Jehovah from all eternity.

Other scriptures referring to the pre-incarnate Jesus as the Angel of the Lord are Gen 22:11-18; 24:7, 40; 31:11; 48:16; Ex 23:20-23; 32:34; 33:2; Nu 20:16; Judg 2:1-4; 13:3-6,9,13-21; 1Ki 19:5-7; 2Ki 1:3,15; 1Chr 21:15-17; Psa 34:7; 35:5-6; Eccl 5:6; Isa 37:36 with 2Ki 19:35 and 2Chr 32:21; Isa 63:7-9; Dan 6:22. Bible scholars generally agree that the foregoing scriptures all refer to the pre-incarnate Jesus as the Angel of the Lord. In all other places in scripture where the Angel of the Lord is found, the term refers to ordinary angels. The pre-incarnate Jesus also visited Daniel and spoke to him in Dan 10:5-6 (CP Dan 10:5-6). Many Christians believe that this was the angel Gabriel but that is not correct (CP Dan 7:9 with Rev 1:12-15). The man referred to in all these scriptures is the same person – Jesus. His clothing was fine linen; His loins were girded with a golden girdle; His hair was like pure wool; His eyes were like lamps of fire; His arms and feet like polished brass and His voice was like a multitude – the sound of many waters. Gabriel did not speak to Daniel in Ch 10 until V10 (CP V10-14). Clearly scriptures do not teach that Jesus was eternally the Son of God, but that He became the Son at His incarnation. This in no way refutes the Christian doctrine of the *trinity* – the three in one Godhead – as this study clearly teaches that Jesus, as we know Him, was an equal member of the Godhead from all eternity. See also comments on Mt 1:18-21, 3:16-17, Jn 1:1, 5:16-23, 12:41, Ac 13:33, 20:28, Php 2:5-8, 1 Ti 3:16, He 1:5, 5:5, 1 Jn 5:6-9, Rev 1:8.

**1:46-47**      *Was Mary born without sin as so many believe?*

As this passage clearly proves, Mary was not the "immaculate conception", born without the stain of original sin, as so many have been led to believe. Her own acknowledgement of God as her Saviour shows that she recognized herself as a sinner. Jesus also aligned Mary with other sinners (CP Mk 3:31-35; Lu 11:27-28). Jesus is the only person ever to be born sinless (CP Jn 14:30; Ro 3:10, 23; 5:8, 12, 18-19; He 2:18; 4:15; 1Pe 2:21-22; 1Jn 1:8-10). These scriptures are all-inclusive terms – they include Mary. Jesus was the only righteous person who ever lived. Everyone else, including Mary, is only made righteous in Him (CP 2Cor 5:20-21).

**1:78-79**      *What does the word "dayspring" refer to here?*

*Dayspring* means the springing up of light. In scripture it is used only in a spiritual sense. Firstly, it refers to the coming of John as Christ's witness (CP Jn 5:35) and then it refers to Christ Himself, as the

light of the world (CP Isa 9:2; 60:1-3; Mal 4:2; Mt 4:16; Lu 2:25-32; Jn 1:1-9; 3:19-21; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35-36, 46; 2Pe 1:19; Rev 22:16).

**2:4-7**              *Was the day on which Jesus was born December 25?*

No, this is merely the date the Roman Catholic, Lutheran and non-Lutheran Protestant churches observe as Christ's birthday. The eastern Orthodox churches observe it on January 6, and the Armenian church on January 19. So we see that even among churches there is no agreement as to when Christ was actually born. Scriptures do not tell us either. All we know is that it was at a time and season when shepherds were able to tend their flocks in the fields at night (CP Lu 2:8-18). This implies that the weather was much milder than it would have been had Jesus really been in the middle of the northern hemisphere winter in December or January. Jesus Himself even spoke against the cold of winter (CP Mt 24:15-22).

December 25 was the day on which a pagan festival had been celebrated for centuries before Christ in honour of the birth of the son of the Babylonian goddess Astarte, or Ashtoreth, the so-called queen of heaven. It was introduced into the church in the fourth century and adapted to Christianity and made to represent Christ's birthday. Christ gave no mandate whatever for Christians to celebrate His birth, only His death. And even then it did not involve a specific day, but whenever Christians partake of communion (CP Lu 22:15-20; 1Cor 11:23-26). December 25, or Christmas Day as it is called, is purely a human invention. It is not of God. There is no historical record of Christians ever celebrating Christ's birth at all before the fourth century.

This is not teaching that Christians cannot celebrate the birth of Christ. Whatever they do is between them and God (CP Ro 14:4-13). This teaching is simply stating the fact that it is not a mandate of scripture, and therefore is not compelling upon Christians to celebrate December 25, or Christmas Day, as the day on which our Lord was born. (According to the Encyclopedia Americana 1942 edition, Vol. 6, page 623 Christmas was a feast established in memory of the Saviour in the fourth century. In the fifth century the western – Roman Catholic – church ordered it to be celebrated forever on the day of the old Roman feast of the birth of Sol.) See also comments on Mt 27:50, Mk 16:1, Ac 12:4.

**2:33**              *Why did Mary and Joseph marvel at what Simeon said about Jesus here?*

(CP V25-33) *Marvelled* here means to be struck with wonder and admiration. Simeon had been told by the Holy Spirit that he would not die till he had seen the Messiah. When he saw Jesus he knew that he was looking at Messiah and his proclamation that Jesus was to bring salvation to the gentiles as well as to the Jews amazed Mary and Joseph, because although they had been told that Jesus would be Messiah, they had not comprehended the scope of His ministry – that it would be to the entire world, not only to Israel (CP Rev 7:9).

**2:34-35**      *What is Simeon prophesying here?*

In V34, Simeon declares that Jesus will be a stumbling block – the *fall* – to many of the Jews, who will reject Him (CP Psa 118:21-22; Isa 8:14-15; Mt 21:42-45; Ac 4:10-11; Ro 9:31-33; 11:7-10; 1Cor 1:21-24; 1Pe 2:6-8). None of these scriptures teach that God had made it impossible for the Jews to believe in Christ because He had already predetermined not to save them, as some claim. The Jews rejected the gospel of their own volition (CP Ac 13:44-49; 28:23-28). But Jesus will be the salvation – the *rising again* – of Israel when the remnant of the Jews who survive the Great Tribulation accept Him as Messiah (CP Isa 1:9; Zech 12:8-13:1; Ac 15:13-18; Ro 11:25-32). Simeon also predicts that there will be intense opposition to Christ’s ministry – Christ would be for *a sign which shall be spoken against*. The *sword that shall pierce Mary’s soul* in V35 refers to the personal grief and anguish she would suffer as she watched her son die in agony on the cross. Finally, the rejection of Messiah would reveal the appalling truth about the apostate state of the Jews.

**2:36-37**      *How old was Anna?*

Most Bible scholars agree that Anna was an eighty-four years old widow whose husband died after only seven years of marriage. (Had she been widowed for eighty-four years as some teach, and married for seven years from about fourteen years of age, she would have been nearly one hundred and five or so at this time.)

**2:41-50**      *Why did Mary and Joseph not understand what Jesus meant here?*

Mary and Joseph both had Christ’s earthly mission clearly revealed to them (CP Mt 1:18-25; Lu 1:26-55; 2:25-38). But like many others in scripture they did not fully comprehend or believe all that was revealed (CP Mt 11:2-3; Mk 8:27-33; 9:9-10, 30-32; 16:9-14; Jn 2:22). Mary and Joseph were struck with astonishment and admiration when they found Jesus debating with the doctors of the law in the temple after they had been frantically searching for Him for three days, yet they should have expected it, as Jesus gently reminded them in Lu 2:49. (See also comments on Mt 11:2-3, 16:21-23 and Mk 9:9-10.)

**3:3-6**      *See comments on Mt 3:1-6.*

**3:9**      *How are we to understand this?*

John is speaking figuratively here of the coming Christ who would test the reality of man’s repentance (CP V8). *Fruits worthy of repentance* are works of faith. Repentance and faith are inextricably linked in scripture (CP Mk 1:14-15; Ac 3:19 and 20:21 with Jas 2:14-26). Those who do not manifest the fruits of repentance will be consigned to hell (CP Jn 15:1-6). “The branches that do not bear fruit” here refer to mere professors of faith in Jesus, not active doers of His word (CP Mt 7:21-27; 12:30). See also comments on Mt 7:21, 12:30, Jn 15:2, 15:4-6, Jas 2:14-26.

**3:10-14**      *What exactly is John the Baptist teaching here?*

John teaches here that repentance is not an abstract religious term or a matter of form and ceremony, but a radical change from a self-centred existence of greed and dishonesty to a practical expression of moral and ethical relationships with others (CP Isa 58:6-8; Lu 11:37-41; 19:8; 2Cor 8:14; Ga 6:10; 1Ti 6:17-19; Jas 2:14-16; 1Jn 3:16-19). Justice and mercy must be practiced among all people – those who have more than they need are to impart to those who are without. This is not teaching however that we must give all our surplus to others regardless of how dishonest or idle they may be (CP 1Ti 5:8).

**3:15-17**      *See comments on Mt 3:11*

**3:21-22**      *See comments on Mt 3:16-17*

**3:23-38**      *See comments on Mt 1:1-17*

**4:1-13**      *See comments on Mt 4:1-11*

**4:16-21**      *Where in the book of Isaiah is the prophecy Jesus quoted in V18-19 to be found?*

This prophecy is found in Isa 61:1-2. It foretells the purpose of Messiah’s first coming (CP Isa 61:1-2). Jesus did not quote V2b, “...and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn” in Lu 4:19, because the day of vengeance will not occur until His second coming (which V2b-11 covers). The purpose of Jesus’ first coming was to preach the gospel to the poor, the destitute, the afflicted, the humble, those crushed in spirit, the brokenhearted (CP Isa 61:3). It was to heal those who were bruised and oppressed, physically and spiritually (CP Isa 53:4-5; Mt 8:16-17; Ac 10:38; 1Pe 2:24). It was to open the spiritual eyes of those blinded by Satan and the things of the world, in order that they might see the light of the gospel (CP Jn 9:39). It was to proclaim the time of true freedom and salvation from sin, Satan, fear and guilt (CP Jn 8:36; Ro 5:8-19; 8:1-2; 2Ti 1:7). Jesus started the work – now Christians are to finish it (CP Mt 28:18-20; 2Cor 5:18-20).

**4:23**      *What does the proverb Jesus quoted here teach?*

In this proverb Jesus anticipates the Jews’ demands that He perform the miracles in Nazareth that He performed in Capernaum to prove to them who He was, but Jesus was in effect telling them that His signs are only for believers, not unbelievers. Notwithstanding that the Jews were greatly impressed by what Jesus said in V18-21 after He read the scroll in the Synagogue, they still only saw Him as the son of the local carpenter, not the Messiah He claimed to be (CP V16-22 with Mk 6:1-5). Jesus knew that like other prophets before Him, He would never be accepted in His own home town (CP Lu 4:24). See also comments on Mt 13:53-58.

**4:28-30**      *Why were the Jews filled with wrath against Jesus and trying to kill him here?*

(CP also V18-27). While the Jews marvelled at what Jesus had to say about God's grace in Isaiah's prophecy, they were offended and stung to fury, and tried to kill Him for first claiming Messiahship and then declaring that God's grace would be withheld from the Jews and extended to the gentiles because of the Jews' rejection of Him. The widow of Sarepta and Naaman were gentiles. The Jews would never accept Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah from God because He had grown up in their midst. They had known Him from childhood and saw Him only as the "carpenter's son" (CP Mt 13:54-58; Mk 6:1-6; Jn 6:32-36, 41-43, 60-66; Ac 2:22-23). See also comments on Mt 13:53-58.

**4:38-39**      *Why did Jesus "rebuke" the fever in Peter's mother-in-law?*

Peter's mother-in-law's fever is also mentioned in Mt 8:14-15 and Mk 1:30-31, but Luke is the only one who records that Jesus rebuked the fever for her healing. *Rebuked* means to admonish strongly, with urgency, authority. Here it implies censure, strong condemnation (as of demons). Jesus rebuked the fever here as He rebuked demons elsewhere in scripture (CP Mt 8:26; 17:14-18; Mk 1:23-25; Lu 4:40-41). Although scriptures do not teach that there were actual demons involved in Peter's mother-in-law's fever, it is obvious that Jesus saw it as the work of the devil and rebuked it accordingly (CP Ac 10:38 with 1Jn 3:8). *Oppressed* in Ac 10:38 denotes being made ill. We learn from this that all sickness is of the devil.

**4:40-41**      *See comments on Mt 8:16.*

**5:4-6**          *What is the lesson to be learned from what happened here?*

This is a lesson in faith for every professing Christian. Peter had already been out all night and caught nothing, but at Jesus' word he went out again. Regardless of what his sense knowledge told him. "...Master, we have toiled all the night, and taken nothing," he did what Jesus said, "...nevertheless at Thy word, I will let down the net." Because Jesus said it, Peter did it, and it worked. And it will work for us too if we will but believe totally in the testimony of scripture and act on it. In so doing we release the creative power of God's word to work in our circumstances and change them if need be. God's word has the power within itself for its own fulfillment (CP Nu 23:19; Isa 55:10-11).

**5:12-16**      *See comments on Mt 8:1-4.*

**5:17-26**      *See comments on Mt 9:1-8.*

**5:27-29**      *See comments on Mt 4:1-11*

**5:33-35**      *See comments on Mt 9:14-15.*

**5:36-39**      *See comments on Mt 9:16-17.*

**6:1-5**          *See comments on Mt 12:1-8.*

**6:13-16**      *See comments on Mt 10:1-4.*

**6:20-23**      *See comments on Mt 5:1-12.*

**6:24-26**      *What do we learn from the woes Jesus pronounces here?*

We learn from the first woe, "*but woe unto you that are rich! For ye have received your consolation*", that anyone trying to find fulfilment only through riches in this life, will have no future heavenly reward (CP Mk 10:17-25; 1Ti 6:6-12; Jas 5:1-6). The second woe, "*woe unto you that are full! For ye shall hunger*", means that only those who adopt a life of self-denial to advance God's kingdom will partake of eternal life (CP Isa 65:13-16; Lu 16:19-25; Php 4:11-13). The third woe, "*woe unto you that laugh now! For ye shall mourn and weep*", is directed to those who pursue happiness and the pleasures of this world to the exclusion of the things of God. They are spiritually unfaithful to Christ and are friends of the world (CP Pr 14:13; Ro 8:7-8; Ga 6:7-8; Jas 4:4). The fourth woe, "*woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets*", means that if Christians are held in high esteem by worldly men, then they are not doing the work of God's word and faithfully proclaiming the gospel, because it is the very nature of the gospel to offend worldly men (CP Jn 15:19; 17:14-18; 1 Jn 4:5-6).

**6:27-35**      *See comments on Mt 5:38-42.*

**6:36-38**      *What fundamental spiritual law is Jesus teaching here?*

Jesus is teaching us here some very important principles of the law of sowing and reaping which apply to every aspect of our Christian walk - the giving of ourselves, our finances, and our time to others. Firstly though, it should be noted here that while Christians should never give in order to receive, the law of sowing and reaping is a principle of life already established by God, and Christians have no say in the matter - giving and receiving go together (CP Pr 11:24-25; 19:17; 22:8-9; Ecc 11:1-6; 2Cor 9:6-10; Ga 6:9-10); it applies to our financial support of the ministry (CP 1Cor 9:4-11; Ga 6:6-7; Php 4:10-29; 1Ti 5:17-18); it applies to our moral behaviour (CP Pr 6:32-35; 11:18, 31; Hos 10:12-13; Ro 1:18-27; Ga 6:7-8), and it applies to our Christian service (CP Ps 126:5-6; Pr 11:30; Dan 12:3). Our every attitude and action toward others will eventually reflect back on us. Just as surely as everything in nature reproduces after its own kind, harvests being as sure as sowings, so everyone of us will reap what we sow in this life and be solely responsible for our destiny in eternity (CP Gen 8:22; Pr 21:13; Mt 5:7; 6:14-15; 7:1-2; Lu 6:31, 36-37; Ga 6:7-8; Jas 2:13).

**6:41-42**      *See comments on Mt 7:1-5.*

**6:46-49**      *See comments on Mt 7:21.*

- 7:19-23      *See comments on Mt 11:2-3.*
- 7:28          *See comments on Mt 11:11.*
- 7:30-35      *See comments on Mt 11:16-19.*
- 7:36-39      *See comments on Mt 26:6-13*
- 7:41-43      *What do we learn from this parable of the creditor and two debtors?*

This parable is only found in Luke's gospel. Jesus told it because of the self-righteous and condescending attitude of Simon the Pharisee – in whose house Jesus was a guest – toward a woman who had just anointed Jesus' feet with expensive ointment after washing them with her tears, and drying them with her hair (CP V36-40). Scriptures do not tell us who the woman is. Some think it is Mary Magdalene because she is mentioned in Lu 8, but that is no proof. Suffice to say she was a repentant sinner.

The parable speaks of a certain creditor to whom two people were in debt. One owed the equivalent to nearly two years wages and the other the equivalent to two months wages. Neither could repay the creditor so he forgave them both their debt. When asked by Christ which one would love the creditor the most, Simon responded in the only logical way: the one who had been forgiven the greatest debt would love the creditor the most. Jesus told him that he had answered correctly and then went on to contrast his attitude toward Jesus and that of the woman (CP V 44-50).

Wrapped up in his own self-righteousness, Simon did not express any gratitude or love toward Jesus that would be an acknowledgement of his faith in the person of Christ, and his need for forgiveness, as the woman did. That is why Jesus told her that her sins were forgiven; that her faith had saved her, and to go in peace. The woman was not saved because of what she did, but because of her faith in the person of Christ. Her faith led her to do what she did. We learn from this that love for Jesus can only be genuine when we sincerely acknowledge Him as the Saviour in whom we receive forgiveness of sins. We can believe in Jesus and even serve Him, but it is only by acknowledging Him as Saviour and Lord that we express our love for Him as He deserves (See also comments on Mt 26:6-13).

- 8:1-2          *See comments on Mt 26:6-13.*
- 8:3            *What do we understand from this?*

This is the first mention in scripture as to how Christ and His disciples received their support. Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna and many other women supported them (CP V1-3). The word *substance* here refers to things which someone has, goods, possessions. These women and others provided for Jesus' needs financially and otherwise. They were obviously all repentant sinners. A great many Christians believe Mary Magdalene was a prostitute, but scriptures do not teach that. All they teach is that

Jesus cast seven demons out of her, which certainly does not make her a prostitute. Furthermore, scriptures generally teach that demons affected people they possessed physically, not morally (CP Mt 8:16-17; 28-34; 9:32-33; 15:21-28; Mk 9:17-27; Lu 4:33-36; 11:14; Ac 16:16-18).

- 8:4-15        *See comments on Mt 13:3-9.*
- 8:16-17      *See comments on Mk 4:21-25.*
- 8:18          *See comments on Mt 13:12.*
- 8:19-21      *See comments on Mt 12:46-47.*
- 8:22-25      *See comments on Mk 4:35-39.*
- 8:36-37      *See comments on Mt 8:28-34.*
- 8:52          *See comments on Mt 9:23-24.*
- 9:1-6         *See comments on Mt 10:9-14*
- 9:10-17      *See comments on Mt 14:13-21.*
- 9:18-22      *See also comments on Mt 16:13-18*
- 9:23          *See comments on Mt 10:37-38.*
- 9:24-25      *See comments on Mt 10:39.*
- 9:26          *What coming is Jesus referring to here?*

His second coming – after the Great Tribulation – when He comes again for the battle of Armageddon and to set up His millennial reign on earth (CP Isa 63:1-6; Dan 7:13-14; Zech 14:1-5; Mt 24:29-31; 26:64; 2Th 1:7-10; 2:8; Jude 14-15; Rev 1:7; 11:15; 19:11-21). See also comments on Mt 25:31-46.

- 9:27-36      *See comments on Mt 16:28*
- 9:44-45      *See comments on Mk 10:32-34*
- 9:49-50      *See comments on Mk 9:38-41*
- 9:51-53      *Why did the Samaritans reject Jesus?*

The Samaritans were descendants of Jew and pagan intermarriages during the Babylonian captivity of the Jews (CP 2Ki 17:24-34 with Neh 13:23-27). After the exiled Jews returned home they rejected the Samaritans offer of help to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, and there has been enmity between them ever since. The Jews held the Samaritans in contempt (CP Jn 4:9, 19-22 with 8:48). Lu 9:53 tells us that the Samaritans would not receive Jesus because "...His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem", which obviously implied as far as they were concerned, Christ's contempt for them also. How wrong they were. They were included in His propitiatory death, and were subsequently converted to Christianity (CP Ac 8:5-25).

**9:54-56** *Does what Jesus says here signify disapproval of the fire Elijah called down from heaven?*

No! What Elijah did in the Old Testament was sanctioned by God for His purposes to be fulfilled at that time (CP 2Ki 1:1-17). Under the new covenant no one has any such authority. Christianity is not to be propagated by force but by the gospel of grace (CP Jn 16:1-3 with Mt 5:38-47; 7:1-2; Ro 12:17; 1Th 5:15; 1Pe 3:9). As we saw in our study on Lu 9:51-53, even though the Samaritans rejected Jesus here they were subsequently won to Christ. (See comments on 9:51-53).

**9:57-62** *See comments on Mt 8:18-22*

**10:1** *See comments on Mk 6:7*

**10:1-12** *What do we learn from Christ sending these disciples out and His instructions to them?*

There are life principles highlighted here which apply to Christians in every age. The first principle is the sending out of the disciples in pairs "... two by two". Christ also sent the twelve out like this (CP Mk 6:7). Sending them out two by two was for both legal and practical reasons. In the divine order every word is established in the mouth of two or three witnesses (CP Nu 35:30; De 17:6; 19:15; Mt 18:15-16; Jn 8:16-18; 2 Cor 13:1; He 10:28). Scriptures also teach that two are better than one for practical purposes. When one falls the other can lift him up; when one is discouraged the other can encourage him; when one is weak the other can strengthen him; when one is prevailed against the other can stand with him (CP Pr 27:17; Eccl 4:9-12; Ro 15:14). Two can also prevail with God in unified prayer (CP Mt 18:19-20). There are many other scriptures also underlining the two by two principle (CP Mk 14:13; Lu 7:19; Jn 1:35-41; Ac 9:38; 10:7; 13:1-2; 15:27, 32, 36-41; 19:22; 1Ti 5:19). See also comments on Mk 6:7.

The second life principle is in Lu 10:2 "... *pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest*". Christians must constantly pray for God to send workers into the world to the unsaved that they might come to know His saving grace. *His harvest* is every unsaved person in the world – not only those in far-off places, but our own family members and neighbours as well. This does not mean that we wait for God to send other Christians into the field of harvest with the gospel. We have to minister it also, to as many people as we can (CP Mt 28:19-20; Mk 16:15; Lu 24:46-47; Ac 1:8). It is incumbent upon every Christian, whether at home or abroad, to share the gospel to those who do not know it, whether we feel like it or not, and whether the time is opportune or not (CP 2Cor 5:18-19; 2Ti 4:1-2; 1Pe 3:15). See also comments on 2Cor 5:18-19, 2Ti 4:1-2 and 1Pe 3:15.

The third life principle in Lu 10:1-12 is in V3, "... *behold I send you forth as lambs among wolves*" (CP Mt 10:16-17). We learn from this that Christians cannot expect favoured treatment in the world. They can expect to be persecuted and even killed for their

witness to Christ (CP Mk 10:3; 2Ti 3:12 with Ro 8:35-36; Ac 12:1-2).

The fourth life principle is in Lu 10:4, "... *carry neither purse, nor scrip nor shoes*". This speaks to Christians of the urgency in proclaiming the gospel. Christians are not to worry about not having sufficient cash reserves or not having made provision for their future well-being before venturing into the field of service. *Scrip* (KJV), refers to a leather bag or sack for carrying provisions (CP Mt 10:10; Mk 6:8; Lu 9:3). The urgency of proclaiming the gospel is highlighted even further in the fifth life principle, also in Lu 10:4, "... *and salute no man by the way*". This admonishes Christians not to spend any time on small talk with anyone they meet in their Christian walk that would retard the proclamation of the gospel. Christians must be courteous and civil toward those we meet, but we cannot waste time on profitless talk (CP 1Pe 3:8 with 2Ki 4:29).

The sixth life principle is in Lu 10:5-8 (CP V5-8). This teaches that Christian field workers should stay where they are favourably received and be prepared to live simply and gratefully. They should not go looking for more luxury accommodation, otherwise it will distract from the gospel message. As workers of the word they are entitled to be fed by those to whom they minister the word (CP 1Cor 9:7-11; 1Ti 5:18).

The seventh life principle is found in Lu 10:9, "... *and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, the kingdom of God has come nigh unto you*". Christ has empowered Christians to heal the sick and it is incumbent upon us to do so by virtue of this command (CP Mk 16:15-18). Healing is a sign that the kingdom of God is near. Signs are the evidence to a lost world that Jesus is alive; He confirms the ministries of all who do the work of God with signs following (CP Mk 16:20; Ac 5:12). Signs are a demonstration of the spirit and of power that awaken unbelievers to a consciousness of the presence and power of God, which raises their faith in Jesus, and they get saved (CP Ac 3:1 – 4:4; 5:12-14). See also comments on Mk 16:17-18, Jn 14:12-14, Ac 3:1-16, 4:4.

In conclusion, Jesus rounds off His instructions to the disciples in Lu 10 with a dire warning in V 10-12 to any city or town which rejects the gospel. Jesus warns them that there will come a time when the gospel will no longer be available to them, and they will be judged more severely than Sodom in the Old Testament. This of course also applies to individuals who reject the gospel. Once the church is taken to heaven they will have no further chance to repent (CP Lu 10:10-12 with 2Th 2:10-12). See also comments on 2Th 2:9-12.

**10:18** *What did Jesus mean by His saying that He saw Satan fall like lightning from Heaven?*

(CP V17-19). Some believe that Jesus was referring to an actual event in time past when Satan rebelled against God and was cast out of Heaven (CP Isa 14:12-15; Eze 28:11-19). The prophecy in Eze 28 has a double application. It is directed to both the

king of Tyre and Satan, the supernatural force behind the king. Others believe that Jesus saw in the disciples' ministry the present and ultimate defeat of Satan (CP Lu 10:17-19). *Serpents* and *scorpions* in V19 are symbols of spiritual enemies and demonic powers. Whatever we believe here is not fundamental to salvation though. More important is the fact that Jesus' words in V18 underline the power he has endured His followers with over all of Satan's power in V19. It is more important for Christians to know that than the other (CP Psa 91:13; Eze 2:6; Mk 16:17-18; Ro 16:20).

**10:20** *Why did Jesus tell the disciples not to rejoice over the fact that they had power over demons?*

The fact that one's name is written in Heaven is to be our source of joy, not the power we have been given over demons, although Jesus does expect us to manifest that power in His name throughout our Christian walk (CP Psa 91:13; Eze 2:6; Mk 16:17; Ro 16:20). This empowering is still valid today for all who believe in Christ, as those scriptures clearly teach. It was not only for believers in the first century church, as so many in the contemporary church have been taught. (See also comments on Lu 10:18.)

**10:29-37** *What does the parable in V30-37 here teach?*

This is called the parable of the good Samaritan. It is only recorded by Luke and teaches that our neighbour is any person whose need we know and whose need we are able to meet. We fulfill the righteousness of God's commandment that we are to love our neighbour as ourselves when we respond to such a person's need, whether they be a brother or sister in the Lord, or our worst enemy (CP Ex 23:4-5; Mt 5:43-48; Lu 6:27-36; Jn 13:34-35; Ro 13:8-10; 15:1-3; Eph 4:25; 1Jn 3:11, 16-18). God's command to love our neighbour as ourselves extends far beyond our immediate circle of friends and other Christians with whom we fellowship on a regular basis. It is a call to show mercy and love to every other human being we encounter in our Christian walk. But we must remain part of mainstream humanity in order to fulfill the righteousness of this commandment. If we raise protective barriers to live sheltered lives as Christians and not do as God commanded, like the priest and the Levite in the parable, we transgress God's two greatest commandments and will incur His wrath (CP Lev 19:17-18; Mt 22:36-40; Lu 10:25-28; Ga 5:14; Jas 2:8-10 with Mt 7:21-27; Ro 2:13; Jas 1:22-25).

**10:38-42** *What is "that good part" which Mary chose?*

The Greek construction of this sentence has Martha fussing about with details that were unnecessarily elaborate. The one thing necessary – *that good part* – was exemplified by Mary, sitting at Jesus' feet in an attitude of worship, listening to what He had to say. Jesus gently rebuked Martha, not for serving, but for her over-care in service. How Jesus contrasts Martha and Mary here underlines for us the importance of

balancing practical duties with personal devotion. The core teaching is that we must never be too busy to stop and listen to what Jesus has to say. In the divine order Mary's priority of listening to Jesus has precedent over Martha's priority of putting on a good meal.

**11:5-10** *What exactly does Jesus teach in this parable?*

This is called the parable of the friend at midnight. It is used by some in the church to teach how we need to persist in praying for God to meet a particular need if it does not immediately manifest. But that is not correct (CP V1-4). This is what is commonly called the Lord's prayer. Jesus uses it as the model prayer to teach us to pray, and He then goes on to illustrate by the parable of the friend at midnight how God will answer our prayers. The man in the parable got what he needed although it was midnight, because he boldly and unashamedly went to his friend, knocked on his door, and asked for it. In V9-10 Jesus promises that we can do the same with God. All we have to do is what the man in the parable did: ask, seek and knock. The word *importunity* in V8 means shamelessness, boldness, impudence, audacity. It does not mean persistence, thus the parable simply teaches that, as the man who shamelessly dared to ask his friend to meet his needs at midnight got his needs met, so too believers who shamelessly through prayer ask, seek and knock, will also get what they need from God (CP Mt 7:7-11; 2Cor 1:19-20; 1Jn 3:19-22; 5:14-15). God's will is His word, and if we abide in Him, and His word abides in us, we will never ask for anything outside of His will. On this basis believers can always pray, confidently believing that they will receive from God that which they pray for without having to continuously ask Him for it (CP Jn 15:7 with Mk 11:22-24 and Php 4:6-7).

**11:14-22** *See comments on Mt 12:25*

**11:23** *See comments on Mt 12:30*

**11:24-26** *See comments on Mt 12:43-45*

**11:27-28** *See comments on Mk 3:31-35*

**11:29-30** *See comments on Mt 12:38-40*

**11:31-32** *How are we to understand what Jesus says here?*

The queen of the south is the queen of Sheba (CP 1Ki 10:1; 2Chr 9:1). Some bible commentators place Sheba as the home of the Sabeans in south west Arabia, now modern day Yemen. Others place it as Ethiopia. Regardless of its location, it was a great distance from Jerusalem "... *the utmost parts of the earth*". Yet the queen of Sheba journeyed there to find out for herself if what she had heard of the fame of Solomon was true. When she met Solomon she was overwhelmed by his wisdom and the splendour of his kingdom. She recognized that it was God who was the source of Solomon's blessings and she glorified Him (CP 1Ki 10:2-9; 2Chr 9:2-8). As a result of seeing and hearing Solomon, the queen believed in God. It is in this sense that she will rise

up in judgement against the Jews who were privileged to see Jesus – a greater one than Solomon – work miracles, but nonetheless rejected Him. It should be noted here that although the queen of Sheba acknowledged our Lord as the God of Israel, there is nothing in scripture to indicate that she accepted Him as her God also, to the exclusion of all others. So we do not know if she was saved.

**11:33-36**      *What is the name given to this teaching?*

This is called the parable of the lighted candle, which is also recorded in Mt 5, Mk 4 and Lu 8, only in slightly different versions (CP Mt 5:14-16; Mk 4:21-23; Lu 8:16-18). While the subject matter in these versions varies slightly from Lu 11:33-36, the core teaching is the same – that of letting our light shine, and of being free from all evil and darkness (see also comments on Mk 4:21-23).

**11:37-38**      *Why did Jesus not wash His hands before eating?*

The washing of hands here had nothing to do with hygiene. It was a ritualistic cleansing – the ceremonial and religious dipping of the hands to remove any moral defilement acquired by contact with unholy things. It was not required under the law but was an extrabiblical tradition devised by men (CP Mt 15:1-3, 7-9; Mk 7:1-9). The scribes and the Pharisees were hypocrites – their whole religion was an outward show (CP Mt 23:1-7, 23-28; Lu 11:39-44). To *strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel* in Mt 23:24 means that the scribes and Pharisees ceremonially cleansed outward things which typify inward cleansing, but they never purified the inward man, whence comes the issues of life (CP Mt 15:10-20; Mk 7:14-23). This is an admonition for contemporary Christians too whose christianity goes no deeper than can be seen (CP Mt 7:21-27; Ro 2:13; Jas 1:22-25). See also comments on Lu 11:46.

**11:42**            *See comments on Mt 23:23*

**11:46**            *Who were the lawyers and what were the burdens “grievous to be borne” they burdened men with?*

Lawyers were doctors, or teachers of the law of Moses, who not only refused God’s offer of salvation for themselves, but hindered others from accepting it as well (CP Lu 7:29-30; 11:52). The term *lawyers* in the New Testament was used of scribes synonymously with doctors of the law, which teaches that all lawyers were scribes. However, all scribes were not lawyers (CP Mt 22:34-35; Lu 5:17-21; 11:44-46). The *burdens grievous to be borne* with which the lawyers burdened men, were the countless extrabiblical ceremonial observances and rituals they devised and added to the law that had to be rigorously observed by the common folk, but which they themselves ignored (CP Mt 15:1-8; 23:1-7, 27-28; Mk 7:1-13). The lawyers, together with the scribes and Pharisees, were hypocrites. Everything they did was done to be seen of others. The sum of their goodness was only that which was seen. The *woes*

Jesus pronounced over them were denunciations of their practices (see also comments on Lu 11:37-38).

**11:49-51**            *What does Jesus mean by this?*

Jesus Himself is the wisdom of God (CP 1Cor 1:23-24, 30). In Lu 11:49, Jesus is speaking of Himself sending apostles and prophets to the Jews of His generation who would persecute and scourge and kill some of them (CP Mt 23:34-36). This was fulfilled in the first century church (CP Ac 4:1-21; 5:17-18; 6:8-15; 8:1-4; 12:1-4; 14:1-2, 19-20; 16:16-24; 17:2-9; 21:30 – 28:31). That generation of Jews were privileged to have Jesus present among them and witness His miracles (CP Ac 2:22-23). But because they rejected Jesus and killed Him, their judgement would be greater than any other generation. They would be held responsible for the shed blood of every righteous person from Abel to Zechariah, the Old Testament prophet who was slain between the altar and the sanctuary in the court of the temple (CP Zech 1:1). While there is no scriptural record of how Zechariah died, it was undoubtedly the way Jesus said. (An earlier prophet also called Zechariah was also slain in the court of the temple, which is recorded in 2 Chronicles, but His father was Jehoida, not Berechiaiah, as Jesus said (CP 2Chr 24:20-22)). The greater judgement that came upon that generation was the destruction of both Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD (CP Mt 22:1-10; 23:36-38; 24:1-2; Lu 19:41-44).

**12:1-3**            *What is Jesus warning the disciples against here?*

Jesus is warning the disciples against allowing fear of man to influence their proclamation of His gospel. *Leaven* in the New Testament symbolizes any evil influence in the church. Here Jesus brands it hypocrisy (CP 11:37-44). The Pharisees were hypocrites. They were only interested in the outward show of religion and Jesus warns the disciples against being influenced by them in any way. He warns the disciples that any unwanted truths they hide will all be revealed in due course, and it is better for them to suffer persecution for declaring the full counsel of God now, than to lose their souls in hell later. This is an admonition for contemporary Christians also (CP Mt 10:24-28; 16:26-27; Mk 8:36-38; Lu 9:24-26). See also comments on Mt 10:39; Lu 11:37-38 and 11:46.

**12:4-9**            *See comments on Mt 10:28*

**12:10**            *See comments on Mt 12:31-32*

**12:13-15**          *What is the point Jesus makes here?*

Jesus refuses to arbitrate in this dispute, pointing out to the man that there is much more to life than squabbling over an inheritance for the sake of accumulating earthly riches. *Abundance* in this context means more than is needed. Jesus warns the man that accumulating more than is needed is the sin of covetousness. Covetousness is idolatry (CP Eph 5:5; Col 3:1-6). These warnings are also for us to heed. Paul wrote these letters to believers, not unbelievers. (See also comments on Lu 12:16-21).

**12:16-21** *What does this parable about the rich man teach?*

This is called the parable of the rich fool. It is a grim warning to Christians against making material possessions the focus of this life at the expense of their souls in the next life. Jesus told this parable to illustrate the folly in thinking that a man's life consists in the abundance of possessions (CP V13-15). *Abundance* in V15 means more than is needed. The acquisition of wealth for the sake of it is covetousness, which is futile and self-defeating, for the end of it is death (CP Eph 5:5; Col 3:1-6). Paul teaches here that covetousness is idolatry, and that no covetous person, or idolater, shall inherit the kingdom of God. A Christian's life is not to be spent accumulating material possessions and wealth which neither gives life nor provides security, because death separates from things. This does not mean that we are not to labour for our own or our family's needs – we are obliged to provide for our family (CP Pr 13:11; Ecc 5:18-20; 1Ti 5:8). We must not confuse covetousness with working to meet our needs. Covetousness is greed for material things and the desire to have more. The selfish amassing of wealth and possessions by Christians indicate that they no longer see life from the vantage point of eternity. Their goal and their fulfilment is no longer in God, but in themselves and their possessions. It may not start out that way but that is how it will end up – we have God's word for it (CP De 31:20; 32:12-18; Hos 8:14; 13:6).

*Jeshurun* in De 32:15 is a symbolic name for Israel. Because of their wealth and success the Israelites had become self-sufficient, thinking that they no longer needed God and His help, but riches and possessions are only temporary. They should not be the object of a Christian's faith – the desire for them causes Christians to sin (CP Pr 28:16, 20-22; 1Ti 6:9-12). Paul teaches in 1Ti 6:9-12 that the pursuit of wealth debases the mind, destroys godly traits and makes Christians selfish, proud, and avaricious, which all lead to eternal damnation. *Perdition* refers to the state after death wherein exclusion from salvation is a realized fact, wherein man, instead of becoming what he might have been in God, is lost and ruined forever. In this context perdition is the final destiny of Christians who determine to be rich, because this desire for wealth is not a passing thing but the result of a process of reasoning – the word *will* in V9 is from the Greek word **boulomai**, which refers to a desire that comes from the reasoning faculties, not from the emotions, while *coveted* in V10 is **orego**, which means to stretch one's self out in order to grasp something; to reach after, or desire something. This applies to all grades of wealth and Paul's warning to Timothy in V11 to flee it is a warning to all Christians whose ambition is to have more money than that which satisfies their everyday needs (CP Psa 37:16; Pr 15:16; 30:7-9; Ecc 5:10-17; 6:9; Jer 45:5; Ro 12:16; Php 4:11-13; 1Ti 6:6-8; He 13:5-6).

Those scriptures all teach the same thing: Godliness with sufficient material blessings to meet our everyday needs should make us content with life. Covetousness and financial fear are overcome by a

contentment founded upon the assurance of God's constant presence for those who seek His help. The word *conversation* in He 13:5 (KJV), means manner, or way of life. This teaches that a Christian's way of life has to be without the desire for more than that which will satisfy our everyday needs. Jesus equates the desire for wealth with serving mammon (CP Mt 6:19-21, 24). *Mammon* refers to earthly riches. Jesus sees in the desire for riches a life-goal totally opposed to God which claims men's hearts, and therefore estranges them from God. None of this teaching denies the promise of God in scripture to prosper His children, but that is the point the parable of the rich fool makes: God is the one who blesses, and believers with wealth and possessions must not see themselves as being rich, but merely stewards of that which is God's. They must be generous, ready to share, and rich in good works (CP De 7:11-15; 28:1-14; Josh 1:8; Psa 1:1-3; 34:9-10; 112:1-9; Pr 11:24-26; 19:17; 22:9; 28:27; Lu 6:38; 1Ti 6:17-19; Jas 2:14-17; 1Jn 3:16-19). Dedication to work as its own reward is a vain pursuit. The ability to enjoy what we have depends on a right relationship with God. Without God it is all in vain. The rich fool in the parable gave no thought to the things of God. He mistook the purpose of life, imagining it consisted in the abundance of his possessions rather than it being a channel of blessing for others of God's children in need. Scriptures teach that the primary purpose for Christians even getting a job is to help others in need (CP Eph 4:28). The fate of the rich fool generalises the fate of all who are more concerned with possessions than the things of God.

**12:33-34** *Does this mean that Jesus expects His followers to sell all that they own and follow Him?*

No! This refers to earthly treasures which God forbids Christians amassing (CP Mt 6:19-34; 19:16, 21-24; Lu 12:13-32). It does not include ordinary homes and necessities of life. The idea is not to hoard and covet, as in Lu 12:13-21. Material wealth and possessions must be used in the service of God, not for self-gratification (CP 1Ti 6:17-19). See also comments on Mt 19:16-22; Mt 19:23-26; Lu 12:13-15 and 12:16-21.

**12:35-40** *See comments on Mt 24:32-33.*

**12:45-48** *What do we learn from what Jesus says here?*

This is called the parable of the unfaithful servant. It teaches that those who profess to love God but are indifferent and careless about the things of God will forfeit their place in His eternal kingdom. They will be eternally damned along with unbelievers (CP V46 with Rev 21:8). They will also suffer worse torment in hell than those who never professed to love God (CP Lu 12:47-48 with Mt 10:14-15; 23:14; Lu 10:12-16; He 10:29; Jas 3:1). Just as there are degrees of rewards in heaven (CP 1Cor 3:13-15), so there are degrees of punishment in hell. This also teaches that ignorance of God's will is no excuse either. An ignorant person will receive less punishment than one who knows God's will, but they will both still be in hell. See also comments on Mt 24:32-33

**12: 49**      *What is the fire that Jesus came to send on the earth?*

Jesus uses *fire* here figuratively of the Holy Spirit's empowering of believers to proclaim the gospel (CP Mt 3:11-13; Mk 1:6-9; Lu 3:16; Ac 1:1-8; 2:1-4). Jesus longed for the gospel to be proclaimed throughout the earth but He had to die first in order for the Holy Spirit to come and empower believers for service (CP Lu 12:50 with Jn 12:23-24; 16:7-15; Lu 24:49 and Ac 1:1-8). Jesus' death and resurrection removed the restraints on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the gospel being proclaimed throughout the earth, but Jesus also knew that the proclamation of the gospel would cause much division and strife, even pitting family members against each other (CP Mt 10:34-36; Mk 10:29-30; Lu 12:51-53).

**12:54-57**      *What is "this time" that the Jews could not discern?*

*This time* refers to then being the time of Messiah. After calling the Jews' attention to the fact that they could discern the signs that pointed to the weather, Jesus rebuked them for not discerning the signs that so obviously pointed to Him as Messiah. Although the Jews had witnessed many miracles proving who Jesus was they still looked for a sign to prove that He was from God (CP Mt 12:38-42; 16:1-4; Mk 8:11-12). See also comments on Mt 12:28-30.

**12:58-59**      *What is the significance of what Jesus says here?*

Jesus is simply teaching here the importance of making every effort to be reconciled with an opponent in a lawsuit without having to go before a judge, because then the respondent would have to pay the utmost penalty (CP V57 with Pr 25:8-9). See also comments on 1Cor 6:1-8.

**13:6-9**      *What does this parable teach?*

This is called the parable of the barren fig tree. It illustrates the fruitlessness of Israel (CP Isa 5:1-7). Jesus told the parable of the barren fig tree to enforce His declaration in Lu 13:1-5 that unless the Jews repented they would all perish (CP Lu 13:1-5). In the context of the calamities that overtook the Galileans and those on whom the tower of Siloam fell, Jesus teaches in the parable that God's patience eventuates in judgement if sinners do not repent. The owner of the vineyard is a figure of God, and the vinedresser, Jesus. The parable also teaches that just as the vinedresser was only prepared to give the tree another year to bear fruit, so too Jesus will not plead for sinners any longer once the day of grace has passed. But this is not only a warning to a fruitless nation or a fruitless sinner, it is also a warning to a fruitless church or a fruitless believer (CP Mt 3:7-10; 7:15-27; Lu 8:5-9, 11-15; Jn 15:1-6, 16; He 2:2-3). The barren fig tree in the parable should not be confused with the fig tree Jesus cursed in Mt 21:17-22 or Mk 11:12-14, 20-24. The lesson we learn from Jesus cursing that fig tree is a divine object lesson in faith. It is not

about the fruitlessness of Israel (CP Mt 21:17-22). See also comments on Mt 21:17-22.

**13:10-16**      *Does what Jesus says here that Satan had bound this woman for 18 years imply that Satan is the cause of all sickness and disease?*

While Satan was directly involved in this woman's condition – a demon spirit (Jesus called it a spirit of infirmity), had taken possession of her and kept her bowed over for 18 years – he does not have to be directly involved to be the cause of all sickness and disease (CP Ac 10:38). This clearly teaches that everyone Jesus healed was oppressed by the devil (CP Mt 4:23-24; 8:8,13,16; 9:35; 12:9-15; 14:14, 35-36; 15:21-30; 19:2; 21:14; Mk 3:10-11; 5:25-29; 6:56; Lu 4:38-41; 5:12-15,17; 6:17-19; 7:1-10,21; 8:43-48; 9:10-11,37-42; 14:1-4; 17:11-17; 22:51; Jn 4:47). The words *heal*, *healed* and *healing* in those scriptures all refer to people being healed, cured, and restored to bodily health. Regardless of whether they were physically sick, diseased or possessed by demons, according to Ac 10:38 *all* the people that Jesus healed were oppressed by the devil. *Oppressed* means exercised dominion against, tyrannized (CP Lu 4:38-39). Peter's mother-in-law's fever is also mentioned in Mt 8:14-15 and Mk 1:30-31, but Luke is the only one who records that Jesus rebuked the fever in order to heal her. *Rebuked* means to admonish strongly, with urgency, authority. Here it implies censure, strong condemnation, (as of demons). Jesus rebuked the fever here as He rebuked demons elsewhere in scripture (CP Mt 17:14-18, Mk 1:23-25, Lu 4:40-41). Although Lu 4:38-39 does not indicate that there were actual demons involved in Peter's mother-in-law's fever Jesus obviously saw it as the work of the devil and rebuked it accordingly (see also comments on Lu 4:38-39).

**13:18-19**      *See comments on Mt 13:31-32*

**13:20-21**      *See comments on Mt 13:33*

**13:22-29**      *See comments on Mt 7:21 and 25:1-13*

**13:30**      *See comments on Mt 19:30*

**13:31-33**      *What does Jesus mean by what He says here that on the third day He would be perfected?*

*Perfected* in this context means to complete, finish a work or duty, bring to an end by reaching the intended goal. The idea was that Jesus was going to work that day and the next, and then bring His earthly work to an end on the third day when He would die. Jesus said this on the way to Jerusalem (CP V22). Jesus was not concerned that Herod would kill Him on the way because He was appointed to die in Jerusalem (CP Mk 10:33-34). See also comments on Lu 9:51.

**13:31-35**      *What events are Jesus foretelling here?*

Firstly, in V35 Jesus is foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem (CP 19:41-44; 21:20-24). History records that Jerusalem was destroyed and the people of Israel were dispersed among the nations in 70 AD. Secondly, Jesus is telling the Jews that the next time they see Him they will gladly accept Him as their Messiah at His second coming after He has defeated Antichrist and all the nations that come against Israel leading up to the Battle of Armageddon (CP Zech 12:8-13:1). Here Zechariah foretells the ultimate conversion of Israel to Christ, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Jews, and the crucified Messiah revealed (CP Ro 11:25-29). Here Paul also foretells the ultimate salvation of Israel.

**14:7-11**      *What is this parable called and what does it illustrate?*

This is called the parable of the lowest seat at the feast. It is also known as the parable of the ambitious guest, and is only recorded by Luke. Jesus told this parable when He saw how the guests at the house He was visiting picked the places of high honour to sit in without waiting for their host to assign them the places. The point the parable illustrates is found in V11: those who exalt themselves in the earthly kingdom of heaven will be put to shame in the eternal kingdom. This is essentially the same point the parable of the labourers in the vineyard makes in Mt 20 "...so the last shall be first, and the first last" (CP Mt 20:1-16). Both the parables of the lowest seat at the feast and the labourers in the vineyard are lessons on humility which abound in scripture (CP Pr 25:6-7; 29:23; Mt 18:3-4; 19:27-30; 23:11-12; Lu 9:46-48; Jn 13:3-17; Ro 12:3,16; Php 2:5-9; Jas 4:6,10; 1Pe 5:5-6). The spiritual reality that Christ teaches in the parable of the lowest seat at the feast is that true honour is not the honour that one claims for oneself, but rather it is the honour conferred on one by God (CP Job 22:29; Psa 18:27; Lu 1:52; 13:29-30; 18:9-14; Jn 5:44; 2Cor 10:18). Honour cannot be secured by self-assertiveness – it comes only through humility and servanthood (see also comments on Mt 19:30 and 20:16).

**14:12-14**      *What does Jesus mean by this saying that whoever makes a feast and calls the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind, will be recompensed at the resurrection of the just?*

Jesus is teaching us here that Christians must never show any form of partiality in their Christian walk (CP Jas 2:1-9). Being hospitable to those who cannot repay our hospitality will bring far more rewards in Heaven than being hospitable to those who can repay (CP Mt 10:40-42; 25:31-40). Jesus does not forbid Christians being hospitable to those who can repay their hospitality, but emphasizes that it must not take precedence over being hospitable to those who cannot repay. The resurrection of the just refers to the first resurrection when Jesus comes again to take all the saints of God, both living and dead, back to Heaven with Him (CP Dan 12:2; Jn 5:28-29; 14:1-3; 1Cor 15:19-23, 50-54; 1Th 4:13-18). Being *recompensed at the resurrection of the just* refers to the Judgement Seat of Christ where rewards for earthly works will be gained or lost by believers (CP Mt 16:27; Ro

14:10; 1Cor 3:11-15; 2Cor 5:10; Rev 22:12). Being recompensed at the resurrection of the just means that the Judgement Seat of Christ will follow immediately upon the first resurrection. The Judgement Seat of Christ and the first resurrection should not be confused with the Great White Throne Judgement and the second resurrection. This takes place over 1000 years later and is when sinners will be consigned to hell (CP Rev 20:4-6,11-15). The Judgement Seat of Christ and the first resurrection are for believers, the Great White Throne Judgement and the second resurrection are for unbelievers.

**14:16-24**      *What is Jesus teaching here?*

This is called the parable of the great supper. Jesus told it in response to what one of the Pharisees who sat with Him at the meal table said in V15 (CP V15). Jesus uses the supper as a figure of the future eternal kingdom, and the guests who were invited first as a figure of the Jews. Jesus is illustrating by the parable His future rejection by the Jews, and as a result the kingdom being opened up to the gentiles. The servant being sent out to bring in guests for the supper is a figure of the evangelical church. *Compel* in V23 does not mean to use force, but rather to persuade (CP V23). This typifies sinners being persuaded to partake of the kingdom benefits by evangelical Christians. This teaching should not only be seen as a rebuke for the Jews, but also as a reminder for contemporary Christians to also "...go out into the highways and the hedges and compel them to come in" (*hedges* here refers to the narrow ways among the vineyards). See also comments on Mt 20:16.

**14:26**      *Does Jesus mean that Christians have to literally hate their parents, wives, and other family members if they want to follow Him?*

No. Jesus uses an idiom of preference here to prove His point. He does not mean that we have to literally hate our parents, wives, and other family members if we want to follow Him, but that we are to love them less than we love Jesus (CP Mt 10:37).

**14:27**      *See comments on Mt 10:37-38.*

**14:28-35**      *What lesson do we learn from what Jesus says here?*

This is a lesson on discipleship – what Jesus really means when He says *follow me*. We learn here that salvation is a paradox – it is both free and costly. Free because Jesus has already paid for it with His life's blood, yet there is a cost in terms of its impact upon those who would follow Jesus. Jesus told three parables here to impress upon His followers that there is a cost involved (CP V25-27). The first parable Jesus told (V28-30), is called the parable of the tower builder. The second is the parable of a king going to war (V31-33), and the third is the parable of savourless salt (V34-35). In the parable of the tower builder Jesus illustrates the absurdity of following Him without first counting the cost (CP V28-30). In the parable of a king going to war Jesus illustrates the impossibility of being saved unless one forsakes all

for Him (CP V31-33). The word *forsaketh* in V33 means to bid farewell, to take leave of, to dismiss, renounce. It carries the notion here of putting something aside to prevent it being a hindrance or gaining excessive control. In the parable of savourless salt Jesus teaches that as salt that has lost its saltiness has no value and is thrown out, so disciples who no longer contain the characteristics of discipleship – that of total consecration to the service of God and complete surrender to the authority of Jesus – are of no value either (CP V34-35). This clearly teaches that *once saved* does not mean *always saved* as many in the church believe. If it were not possible to forfeit salvation then this scripture and others that teach the same thing would be meaningless (CP Lu 9:57-62). We have three seemingly sincere candidates for salvation here but all failed to measure up to the standards Jesus has set for His followers. Jesus is teaching us here that anything less than total commitment to God eliminates one from the future eternal kingdom. The first incident teaches that an emotional enthusiasm that has not considered the cost of abandoning material security to follow Him, is insufficient by Christ's standards. The second teaches that loyalty to Christ must take precedence over all other loyalties – following Christ must be our highest priority. Jesus is not teaching against the propriety of funerals here, but against putting off the work of God. "...but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." Followers of Christ have the urgent task of proclaiming the life that is in Him to those who are lost (CP 2Ti 4:1-2). This is more important than burying spiritually dead people who have died. The third incident teaches that once we start in God's service we cannot turn away. Service to God commands our undivided attention, and if we are not prepared to singlemindedly serve God, then we are not fit to be Jesus' disciples. We also learn from this study that following Jesus is an intellectual, not an emotional decision (see also comments on Mt 8:18-22 and 10:37-38).

**15:1-7**      ***What is Jesus illustrating here in this parable of a lost sheep?***

This is called the parable of the lost sheep. It illustrates how the Father heart of God is directed toward sinners. Jesus told it in response to the Pharisees' murmuring about Him fraternising with sinners in V2 (CP V2). The Pharisees had no concept of a God who loved sinners and sought to reconcile them to Himself. Their view was that God loved the righteous, but hated sinners. The discrepancy between Christ's actions and the Pharisees' concept of God, raised the question of what God's attitude was toward sinners. The question was so vital that Christ went into great detail in Lu 15 to provide the answer, illustrating by three parables again three aspects of the one central truth. The other two parables - we will study them all separately – are the parable of the lost coin in V8-10, and the parable of the lost son in V11-24. In the parable of the lost sheep Jesus compares sinners to a sheep which has gone astray (CP Isa 53:6). The focus of the parable is on the effort expended by the shepherd, and the joy experienced when the sheep is found. In the context of the controversy over His relationship with sinners, Jesus illustrates by the parable that His ministry is

one of seeking and saving sinners, and He emphasizes the joy that abounds in Heaven even if just one sinner repents and is saved. The friends and neighbours who rejoice with the shepherd when the lost sheep is found, is illustrative of the members of the local assembly, whose joy also abounds when a sinner repents and is saved. The ninety-nine just persons in Lu 15:7 are the righteous who have already repented and been saved (CP V7). This parable is also found, though in a slightly different setting, in Mt 18 (CP Mt 18:11-14).

In the parable of the lost coin Jesus again shows how the Father heart of God is directed toward sinners, and how He diligently seeks to save them, only this time Jesus uses a woman and a coin to make His point (CP Lu 15:8-10). Just as the woman diligently set about to find the lost coin, so too God diligently sets about to find a lost sinner, and just as the woman rejoiced with her friends when the lost coin was found, so too God rejoices with the local church when a lost sinner is saved (CP V11-24). This is the parable of the lost son, also known as the parable of the prodigal son, so-called because *prodigal* means recklessly wasteful, which is what the son was. This parable simply teaches another aspect of the same central truth as the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin. All that is taught throughout scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, is a running commentary on this parable. It proclaims the good news of the gospel. The Father's compassion toward His repentant son in the parable portrays God's infinite love and forgiveness toward every repentant sinner, and as the father joyfully celebrated His son's return, and restored him to his position of sonship in the family, so too God rejoices over every sinner who repents, and restores them to sonship with Him (CP Jn 1:12; 8:14-17; Ga 4:5-7; Php 2:14-15; 1Jn 3:1-2).

**15:25-32**      ***Why was the elder son angry at his brother?***

This is the concluding part of the parable of the lost son. Here Jesus describes the attitude of the elder son toward both his repentant brother and his father. In portraying the elder son as angry, bitter, unforgiving and loveless toward his brother, and resentful and self-righteously indignant toward his father, Jesus was illustrating for the Pharisees and scribes their attitude toward Him and the sinners He fraternised with. The elder son had the same hardness of heart toward his brother and his father as the Pharisees and the Scribes had toward repentant sinners and Jesus, and his self-righteous claims to having always obeyed his father's commands typified the Pharisees' self-righteous claims to having always obeyed God's commands (CP Mt 23:23-28; Lu 18:9-14). The elder son had no right to complain – the same privileges his brother was now enjoying were always available to him, but he never availed himself of them, just as the Pharisees and Scribes would not avail themselves of the kingdom benefits Jesus proclaimed. Like the elder son rejected his father's invitation to take part in the feast, the Pharisees and Scribes rejected Jesus' invitation to be a part of the kingdom and thus disqualified themselves from receiving God's blessings (CP Ac 13:46). See also comments on Lu 17:7-10.

**16:1-13** *Is Jesus commending the dishonesty of the steward here?*

No! It is the steward's own lord who commends his ingenuity, not the Lord Jesus Christ (CP V8). This is called the parable of the unjust steward. It is an unusual parable, but is easy to understand when we are clear in our minds what it does not teach. Firstly, it does not teach that Christ condones the cunning deceit of the steward – Jesus simply contrasts the shrewd foresight of the steward in using present opportunities to ensure his future earthly well-being, with the lack of foresight by the children of God in not using their present earthly resources for their future heavenly well-being. The point Jesus makes is that worldly men in their sphere to scheme and provide for themselves, are wiser than the children of God in their sphere; unbelievers are shrewder in handling their own temporal affairs than Christians are in handling the affairs of God. This should impress upon us how vital our stewardship is as a test of our relationship with God. Secondly, the parable also does not teach that by using the *mammon of unrighteousness* we can buy our way into Heaven. The *mammon of unrighteousness* refers to material wealth, and Jesus is telling us to use what material wealth we have to win souls to Christ; so that when we get to Heaven they will be there to welcome us. *Everlasting habitations* in V9 refers to the kingdom of Heaven as our eternal home. Souls won through the deployment of our finances now will become our joy and crown of rejoicing in eternity (CP Dan 12:3; 1Th 2:19-20). The core teaching of the parable of the unjust steward is not that believers are to make friends of material wealth, but to make friends for eternity by means of it. If what we have, whether much or little, is faithfully used as a servant of God, then it is capable of providing us with resources of eternal values. Our Lord is teaching us here that the manifestation of common sense or prudence is the test of faithfulness. He is not teaching that Christians have to accumulate wealth for the purpose of extending God's kingdom, as some believe. Nowhere in scripture does God tell us that we need to accumulate money on His behalf – we are simply to make whatever we have available for His purpose. In V10-13 Jesus explains the true meaning of V9 (CP Lu 16:9-13). We must be faithful in the least as well as in much if we want to be received into everlasting life. If we have not been faithful in temporal riches, then the true riches will not be entrusted to us, and if we have not been faithful with that which belongs to another, we will not be rewarded for faithfulness – we cannot serve God and riches. It can only be one or the other (see also comments on Mt 6:24).

**16:14-15** *How is "that which is highly esteemed among men" defined?*

Jesus is responding here to the Pharisees ridiculing Him for telling them that they could not serve both God and mammon in V13 (CP V13). *Mammon* personifies materialism or worldly riches. The Pharisees were money-lovers, but the phrase "*that which is highly esteemed among men*" applies to much more than possessions or wealth. It covers the whole spectrum of what the world exalts and

promotes, not only wealth and possessions, but pride, greed, status and importance, prominence, ambition, self-gratifying pleasures, power and celebrity, which also includes fashion trends, sport, t.v., radio, movies, magazines and books etc.

This is not teaching that Christians cannot dress nicely or be involved in sport, watch t.v., listen to the radio, or read magazines and books etc. But they must not be caught up in fashions or be inordinately interested in sport, titillated by t.v. shows or movies, listen to worldly radio programmes, or read worldly books and magazines. Christians are beguiled into believing that there is no harm in any of these things. But this begs the question: how can they justify any form of amusement or entertainment for themselves while any member of their family is not yet saved, or their best friend or next door neighbour is going to hell? Christians cannot derive pleasure from worldly things at the expense of doing God's work, and please God (CP Jas 4:4; 1Jn 2:15-17 with Mt 7:21-27). See also comments on Jn 15:18-25, Ga 6:14, Jas 4:1-4, 1Jn 2:15-17.

**16:16** *See comments on Mt 11:12-13*

**16:18** *See comments on Mt 5:31-32*

**16:19-31** *Is this a true story or a parable?*

Most Bible commentators call this a parable – the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Many others believe it is a true story; that Jesus is referring to real people here. But whether it is a true story or a parable is not relevant. What it teaches is more important. Jesus told this story after the Pharisees derided Him for teaching the parable of the unjust steward in V1-13 (CP V1-15). The Pharisees were not interested in using their personal wealth to benefit others with eternal life, as Jesus taught in the parable of the unjust steward. They were only concerned with their own self-indulgent lifestyle, portrayed here by the rich man "...which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." This is not teaching though that the rich man went to hell because he was rich and Lazarus went to paradise – Abraham's bosom – because he was poor. Neither affluence nor poverty determines our eternal state, but the life we live on earth. The rich man went to hell because his life was filled with self-centred living, not caring about others of God's children worse off than himself. In his self-indulgent lifestyle the rich man violated God's two greatest commandments (CP Mt 22:34-40). The narrative of the rich man and Lazarus teaches above all else that men cannot profess reverence for God while at the same time living only for the fulfillment of their own self-gratifying desires. God says that it is only our love for others, especially our brothers and sisters in Christ, that proves our love for Him, and we cannot honestly say we love them if we are not prepared to give of our material possessions to them (CP Jas 2:13-17, 1Jn 3:16-19). Anyone claiming to be a born again believer who at the same time consciously sows to their flesh, is guilty of mocking and despising God, and will forfeit their place in His eternal kingdom (CP Pr 19:17; 21:13; 22:9; Ga 6:7-10). We also learn from the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, which

is confirmed by many other scriptures as well, that the souls and spirits of the righteous go straight to heaven when they die (CP Lu 20:38; 23:42-43; Jn 11:25-26; Ac 7:59-60; 2Cor 5:1-9; Php 1:21-24; Rev 6:9-11). Lazarus went straight to paradise, where all the righteous dead went before Christ ascended to Heaven, not because he was poor, but because he found his help in God. Lazarus' name depicted his relationship with God. *Lazarus* means *God has helped* or *God the helper*. The significance of his name suggests that Jesus meant Lazarus to symbolise all the outcasts of society who had no other help but God (CP Mt 5:3; Lu 4:17-18).

Another lesson we learn from this narrative is that there is no light beyond the revelation of God in scripture (CP Lu 16:27-31). Nothing supernatural or miraculous can have any effect on anyone's lifestyle if the word of God is not believed and obeyed. The rich man thought that if someone came back from the dead to warn his brothers of their impending doom that it would appeal to their consciences to alter their lifestyles and so be saved, but Abraham said that nothing could prevent them sharing the same fate as their brother even if someone came back from the dead if they did not believe and obey God's word, which they already had.

Jesus Himself came back from the dead but most people still do not believe on Him. Summing up here, the lessons we learn are that man cannot serve two masters – he cannot serve God and mammon. If a man gains the world but loses his soul, his loss will be eternal – there is no further opportunity to repent after death. Heaven and hell are realities, and personality – feeling, knowing, seeing, reasoning, and remembering – continues in eternity, whether it be in Heaven or hell. It depends entirely upon how we spend our life on earth whether these faculties will aid our bliss in Heaven or add to our torment in hell (see also comments on Mt 6:24).

**17:1-2**      *See comments on Mt 18:6.*

**17:3-4**      *See comments on Mt 18:23-25.*

**17:5-6**      *See comments on Mt 21:17-22.*

**17:7-10**     *What is this parable called and what does it teach?*

This is called the parable of unprofitable servants. It is also known as the parable of the servant's reward; the unworthy slave; the farmer and servant, etc. This parable answers two questions: what is the obligation of a disciple toward Christ, and what attitude should a disciple have while serving Christ? Jesus told this parable to give His disciples a perspective on the meaning of servanthood. In doing what is required, a servant is not doing anything creditworthy, deserving of his master's thanks, he is simply fulfilling his duty. Christians also, in fulfilling their obligations to God should not expect any special rewards either. All that we can do as servants of God is merely our common duty. We merit nothing, and should not expect anything for what we do. This clearly teaches against the attitude of the elder son toward his father in the

parable of the lost son (CP Lu 15:25-32). See also comments on Lu 15:25-32.

**17:20-21**     *How are we to understand this?*

Jesus was telling the Pharisees here that the kingdom of God would not be ushered in by any observable sign. Nor would it be in any particular place, for in fact it was already in their midst. It was embodied in Jesus Himself (CP Mt 4:13-17; 10:1-8; 12:28-30 also Lu 11:14-20). Because of their unbelief and the hardness of their hearts, the Pharisees had failed to recognize Jesus as the embodiment of the kingdom. It should be noted here that the professing church is the visible manifestation of the kingdom in its present earthly aspect. (See also comments on Mt 3:1-3).

**17:22-37**     *See comments on Mt 24:1-3.*

**18:1-8**        *What does this parable of the unjust judge teach?*

This is also known as the parable of the unjust judge and the persistent widow. It is used by many in the contemporary church to teach that when we bring a petition before God we should persist in praying for it like the widow persisted with the judge, until God answers us, like the judge eventually answered the widow. But that is not what the parable is teaching at all. If it did then we are putting a just and holy God in the same category as an unjust and an unholy judge. The parable does not compare the two, it contrasts them. The spiritual teaching of the parable is not about prayer in general, but prayer pertaining to the Lord's second coming – intercessory prayer. It is the concluding part of a very long discourse by Jesus in Lu 17 about His second coming. It is a call to believers to persevere in prayer against the works of the devil until He comes again (CP Lu 17:20-18:8). The conjunction *and* in 18:1 means that V1-8 are a continuation of the discourse commenced in 17:20.

The widow's adversary in the lawsuit before the judge in the parable is the equivalent to our adversary the devil in the earth. The parable teaches us that we are not to be passive spectators in God's kingdom, but that we are to persist in faith and persevere in prayer for God's will to be done on earth in spite of continued opposition and rejection, which is what the unjust judge portrays in the parable. This is what Jesus means when He says that men ought always to pray and not faint in 18:1. He wants believers to keep praying the kingdom in and not give up, even though His second coming may not be immediate. That is why He questions whether the Christians then remaining when He does come back will still be faithfully pressing in for the things of the kingdom and persevering in prayer, as portrayed by the widow in the parable, or will they have given up hope and lost their faith. Jesus then contrasts the unwilling and uncaring judge's tardiness in vindicating the widow, to God's willingness and readiness to vindicate His children. When Jesus comes back God will vindicate His righteous cause and therewith the cause of His children, but they must trust Him and not lose heart in the meantime. They must here and now continue faithfully in the work He has assigned to them (see also comments on Mt 25:14-30 and Lu 19:11-27).

**18:9-14** *Does this parable teach that Christians must close their eyes and bow their heads when they pray?*

No! Six times in scripture Jesus Himself is recorded praying with His eyes open looking up to Heaven (CP Mt 14:19; Mk 6:41; 7:34; Lu 9:16; Jn 11:41; 17:1). The parable Jesus told in Lu 18:9-14 is called the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (a publican is a tax-collector). It is not primarily about prayer, but self-righteousness and religious pride. The purpose of the parable was to expose those who trusted in their own righteousness, and despised others (CP V9). It is about justification and getting right with God. The way to justification is expressed in the parable and summed up in what Jesus says at the end of it "...for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Jesus teaches the same lesson here as he does in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard in Mt 20 (CP Mt 20:1-16). In these two parables Jesus teaches that true humility leads to exaltation. Those who insist on their own righteousness are not only setting themselves against the purpose of God for others, but are cutting themselves off for atonement. The publican went home justified before God because he acknowledged his need for God's mercy. God acquitted him, but not the Pharisee. He came into the temple a sinner and left the same way. The Pharisee was self-righteous – he was not conscious of his sinful nature. He considered himself righteous because of his acts of piety and outward goodness. He is justified in his own eyes and therefore does not need God's mercy. As a result the Pharisee excluded himself from God's redeeming love, and without he repented, salvation as well (CP 1Jn 1:8-10). See also comments on Mt 19:30 and 20:16.

**18:15-17** *See comments on Mt 19:13-15.*

**18:18-23** *See comments on Mt 19:16-22.*

**18:24-27** *See comments on Mt 19:23-26.*

**18:28-30** *See comments on Mt 19:30.*

**18:31-34** *See comments on Mk 10:32-34.*

**18:35-42** *See comments on Mk10:46-52.*

**19:11-27** *What is this parable called and what does it teach?*

This is called the parable of the pounds. It is similar to the parable of the talents in Mt 25 yet is so different (CP Mt 25:14-30). The talents represent spiritual gifts and graces given to every believer according to their respective ability, whereas the pound, which represents God's word, has been given to every believer alike. In the parable of the talents there are only three servants involved who each received a different number of talents, whereas in the parable of the pounds there are ten servants involved, and all received the same amount. There is a variety of stewardship in the parable of the talents, but all are alike responsible in the parable of the pounds. This is the distinctive teaching in the two parables. Jesus

told the parable of the pounds for two reasons: firstly, because He was nearing Jerusalem, which signified that the end of His earthly ministry was at hand – Jerusalem was symbolised in the parable by the nobleman's citizens who said "we will not have this man to reign over us". The nobleman symbolised Jesus Himself (CP Mt 27:21-25; Jn 1:11: 15:18). Secondly, because the crowd with Him thought the kingdom of God should immediately appear, and Jesus wanted them to know that there would be an intervening period of time between His first and second coming, the parable sets out what believers are to do during that time. The word *occupy* (KJV), means be busy, do business, trade with. This is a specific command that has to be obeyed. The pound which all the nobleman's servants alike were given represents the word of God all believers alike have been given (CP 2Cor 5:17-19). And, as the servants had to trade with the pound for the nobleman's profit, so too believers have to do the work of God's word for the advancement of His kingdom (CP Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-16 with Ac 1:7-8; 10:42-43; 2Cor 5:17-20; Jude 3).

The servant who hid his pound in Lu 19 had the same excuse for not investing it as the servant who hid his talent in Mt 25, and both lost what they were given as a result. It was taken from them and given to the servant who already had the most (CP Mt 25:24-30; Lu 19:20-26). The simple teaching here is that worthy Christians will be rewarded while unworthy Christians will be punished. Doers of the word will be saved while merely hearers will be lost (CP Mt 7:21-27; Ro 2:13; Jas 1:22-25; 2:14-26; Rev 1:3). The dominant idea in both the parable of the pounds and the parable of the talents is of a time of trial which must needs come between the departure and the return of our Lord to prepare the judgement which shall fix the position of every man in the state of things which shall follow Christ's second coming (CP Mt 16:27; Rev 22:11-14).

**19:29-40** *See comments on Mt 21:1-7 and 21:9.*

**19:41-44** *See comments on Lu 13:35.*

**20:1-8** *See comments on Mk 11:27-33.*

**20:9-16** *See comments on Mt 21:33-41.*

**20:17-18** *See comments on Mt 21:42-45.*

**20:22-26** *What do we learn from what Jesus says here?*

We learn from this that Christians are divinely obligated to their governments as well as to God. Christians must obey all the ordinances of their governments as well as pay their taxes (CP Ro 13:1-7; 1Pe 2:13-17). It should be noted here that while Christians are instructed to obey their country's laws in these scriptures, that only applies to laws that do not conflict with the supreme law of God (CP Ex 1:15-17; Psalms 75:6-7; Dan 3:12-18; 6:6-10; Mt 2:1-5, 7-9, 12, 15-16; Ac 4:13-20; 5:28-29, 40-42; He 11:23). See also comments on Ro 13:1-2.

20:27-36 See comments on Mt 22:23-30.

20:37-38 *What does Jesus mean that God is not a God of the dead but the living?*

What Jesus says here that God is not a God of the dead but the living, proves that man's soul and spirit is immortal. All people – whether departed from their earthly bodies or not – are still living, and will live forever. When God spoke to Moses out of the burning bush identifying Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He used the present tense (CP Ex 3:1-6). Death does not mean complete annihilation, as some teach. The soul and the spirit are immortal (CP Isa 66:22-24; Dan 12:2; Jn 5:28-29; Ro 14:7-9; 1Cor 15:51-58; 2Cor 5:8; Php 1:20-23; He 11:13-16). Only the body dies at physical death (CP Jas 2:26). The righteous who have died are in a conscious state in Heaven (CP Eph 4:8-10; He 12:22-23; Rev 6:9-11). The unrighteous who have died are in a conscious state in hell (CP Isa 14:9; 66:24; Mt 8:11-12; 10:28; 13:41-42, 49-50; 22:13-14; 24:50-51; 25:29-30, 41-46; Mk 9:42-48; Lu 16:19-31; Rev 20:11-15).

20:41-44 *What was Jesus' purpose in asking this question?*

This is also recorded in Mt 22:41-45 and Mk 12:35-37. In asking this question Jesus was testing the Pharisees' knowledge of Messiah (CP Mt 22:41-45). The Pharisees' answer reflected their view that Messiah would be no more than a man, and Jesus' reply was another assertion of His deity. When the Pharisees said that Messiah would be David's son, meaning that He would be a human descendant of King David, Jesus quoted Psalms 110:1 to show them that He would not be a mere human, because David addresses Him as *Lord – kurios*, God (CP Psalms 110:1-7). Jesus was not disputing that Messiah would be the son of David (CP Mt 1:1), but that being called the son of David does not sum up all that Messiah is. He is also God (CP Acts 2:25-36).

21:5-28 See comments on Mt 24:1-3.

21:29-31 See comments on Mt 24:32-33.

21:32 See comments on Mt 24:34.

21:36 *What is Jesus alluding to here?*

Jesus is alluding to the rapture here – the *catching away* of the church from the earth to go to Heaven with Jesus. This is the first mention of the rapture in scripture. Being raptured is the only way anyone living at that time can escape the events of the Great Tribulation Jesus outlined in V25-26 (CP V25-26; Jn 14:1-3; Php 3:20-21; Col 3:1-7; 1Th 4:13-18; 2Th 2:7-12) but only those who are totally consecrated to the service of God and completely yielded to the authority of Jesus will be counted worthy to escape those things that shall come to pass, and to stand before Jesus as 2Th 2:7-12 clearly teaches (CP 1Jn 2:3-6, 15-17, 28). See also comments on Jn 5:28-29, 14:1-3, 1Cor 15:51-58, Php 3:20-21, 1Th 4:13-18, 5:1-11, 2Th 2:6-8, 2Ti 2:18, Rev 1:19, 3:7-13.

22:3-6 See comments on Mt 26:14-16

22:7-16 See comments on Mt 26:17-19

22:19-20 See comments on Mt 26:29

22:24-27 See comments on Mt 20:20-28

22:31-34 *What follows on after this?*

(CP Mt 26:31-35; Mk 14:26-31; Jn 13:36-38). Here Jesus predicts that Peter would deny him three times that night before the cock crowed. Peter denied that he would, but the gospel writers record it happening exactly as Jesus had foretold (CP Mt 26:69-75; Mk 14:66-72; Lu 22:54-62; Jn 18:15-18, 25-27). It is interesting to note here that while all the gospel writers record Peter as denying Jesus three times before the cock crowed, there are six different denials before six different accusers. Here are the accusers in scriptural order: a young woman (CP Mt 26:69-70; Mk 14:66-68; Lu 22:56-57; Jn 18:16-17), another young woman, soon after (CP Mt 26:71-72; Mk 14:69-70). Those standing nearby (CP Mt 26:73-75; Mk 14:70-72; Jn 18:25). A man (CP Lu 22:58). Another man, about an hour later (CP Lu 22:59-62). A servant of the high priest whose kinsman's ear Peter cut off when Jesus was arrested (CP Jn 18:26-27).

It might also be noted here that Matthew and Mark record Christ's prediction of Peter denying Him as being spoken on the Mount of Olives, on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane (CP Mt 26:30, 34; Mk 14:26-27). Luke and John record it as being said in the upper room, after the last supper (CP Lu 22:34, 39-40; Jn 13:28, 38). Also, the inference from Matthew, Luke and John's gospels is that the cock would only crow once after Peter had denied Jesus three times, whereas Mark records Jesus as saying that before the cock crowed twice, Peter would deny Him three times (CP Mt 26:34; Lu 22:34; Jn 13:18 with Mk 14:30).

It may be a problem for some to reconcile these discrepancies, but they are trivial and insignificant compared to the essential substance of Christ's words, that some time during that night Peter would deny Him whom he had just professed himself so ready to die for, which teaches just how easy it is under stress to deny Jesus. This is the point Jesus was making and it is more important to know that than to worry about seeming discrepancies.

22:35-37 *Why did Jesus change His mind about what the disciples could carry?*

When Jesus first sent the disciples out He was still with them, and the reason He forbade them to carry the things He now sanctions was because He wanted them to trust Him to supply their needs through the generosity of the people to whom they ministered (CP Mt 10:1-10; Mk 6:7-11; Lu 9:1-4; 10:1-8), but now the disciples must prepare themselves for ministry without Jesus. He would soon be branded a criminal – numbered among the transgressors (V37) – and crucified. In contrast to the days when they shared Jesus' popularity, the disciples now could no

longer count on the charity of fellow Israelites. The sword Jesus recommended they purchase in V36 signified protection, not aggression.

**22:38** *What does Jesus mean by His saying here, “it is enough”?*

The disciples obviously did not understand what Jesus meant in V36 when He recommended that they buy a sword. He meant it for protection, not aggression, and when they produced two swords in V38, Jesus curtly dismissed the subject (CP V36). His response, “it is enough” meant in effect “enough of that”. Jesus would not sanction buying a sword for any purpose other than for the protection of the disciples. It was not for His protection, which is confirmed by what occurred in the garden of Gethsemane later on (CP V47-51 with Mt 26:51-54; Jn 18:10-11).

**22:39-46** *See comments on Mt 26:36-44*

**22:44** *Did Jesus literally sweat blood or was His sweat merely like blood?*

Jesus’ blood was literally mingled with His sweat. This is a condition called *Hermitidrosis* which affects people going through extreme mental anguish and stress, such as Christ was going through in his agony in the garden, which He Himself said had brought Him to the threshold of death (CP Mt 26:38; Mk 14:33-35). *Hermitidrosis* is a dangerous condition in which the walls of the subcutaneous capillaries – hair-like blood vessels under the skin – rupture and infuse blood into the perspiration of the one affected.

**22:47-51** *See comments on Mt 26:47-51.*

**23:13-26** *Who was really guilty of killing Jesus?*

The Jews delivered Jesus up to Pilate demanding that He be put to death, and Pilate ordered that Jesus be crucified. But the Jews were held culpable by God – their sin was the greater – for rejecting Jesus and delivering Him up to death in the first place (CP Jn 19:10-11; Ac 2:22-23; 3:13-15; 13:27-28). Pilate wanted to release Jesus but he capitulated to the Jews for political expediency – they threatened to report him to Caesar if he did not execute Jesus (CP Jn 19:12-16). This does not detract from Pilate’s guilt though. He was convinced by his conscience of Jesus’ innocence, but he still condemned Him to death. Thus both Pilate and the Jews were guilty of killing Jesus. God permitted it, for Jesus was the redeeming sacrifice God had predestinated to die for mankind’s sins (CP Gen 3:14-15; Isa 53:1-12; Mt 26:24; Jn 1:29; Ac 4:26-28; Eph 1:4; Rev 13:8). There is a sense in which it could also be said that all mankind killed Jesus too because of their sins for which He died. We may not have been physically

involved in His death as were Pilate and the Jews, but we were the reason for it (CP 2 Cor 5:19, 21; 1 Ti 2:5-6; 1Jn 2:2). See also comments on Mt 27:24-25, Jn 19:11, Ac 2:22-23, 1Th 2:14-15

**23:27-31** *What is Jesus prophesying here?*

Jesus is prophesying here the terrible sufferings that will befall these women when Jerusalem is overthrown, which history records happened in 70AD. Jesus referred to Himself as the green tree and the Jewish nation as the dry tree. The implication being that if His suffering is so great, how much worse will their’s be? V30 forms part of this prophecy also. It does not refer to Rev 6:12-17 as so many think. That scripture refers to the Great Tribulation – this to the fall of Jerusalem (CP Rev 6:12-17).

**23:43** *Where is the Paradise referred to here located?*

This Paradise is also referred to in scripture as Abraham’s Bosom (CP Lu 16:19-26). This Paradise was located in the lower part of the Earth where the souls of the righteous dead went before Christ took them to Heaven with Him when He ascended on high (CP Mt 12:40; Eph 4:8-10; He 2:14-15). There is also a Paradise in the third Heaven where Paul went for a time of learning with Jesus (CP 2Cor 12:1-7 with Rev 2:7).

**23:45** *See comments on Mt 27:51.*

**24:1-11** *See comments on Mk 16:9-13.*

**24:36-43** *What is the significance of what Jesus says here?*

It unequivocally teaches that Jesus was not raised up a spirit as so many believe. He was bodily resurrected; He had a human body made of flesh and bone that could be handled the same as before (CP Jn 20:24-29). He ate meat with the two disciples at Emmaus (CP Lu 24:30-31). He ate fish and honeycomb with the disciples in Jerusalem (CP V41-43). Jesus’ bodily resurrection also proves the immortality of the soul and spirit. Only the body dies at physical death (CP Jas 2:26).

**24:46-47** *See comments on Mt 28:19-20(A).*

**24:49** *What is the promise of the Father Jesus is going to send upon the disciples?*

This refers to the Spirit baptism, which is promised to all believers (CP Mt 3:1-2,11; Mk1:1-6; Lu 3:2-3,16; Jn 1:32-34; 7:37-39; 14:15-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:7-15; Ac 1:4-8; 2:1-4, 38-39; 5:32; 10:44-46; 15:7-9; 19:1-7). See also comments on Mt 3:11, Ac 1:8; 2:1-4(A) and Ac 2:1-4(B).