

Luke

Universal Savior Ministers in Sovereign Kingdom Progress

To Seek the Lost					To Save the Lost				
Introduction		Ministry			Passion		Conclusion		
1:1–4:13		4:14–21:38			22–23		24		
Sources 1:1-4	Advent 1:5– 2:52	Prepared 3:1–4:13	Galilee 4:14– 9:50	Travelogue 9:51–19:27	Rejection 19:28– 21:38	Night 22:1– 23:25	Crucifixion 23:26-56	Resurrection 24:1-44	Commission 24:45-53
0 kingdom references	1	0	8	25	2	4	2	0	0
30 years		3 years		3-4 months	8 days				
Miracles Prominent				Teaching Prominent					
Caesarea									
Written AD 57-59 Covers 5 BC–AD 33									

Key Word: Sovereignty I

Key Verse: “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10).

Summary Statement: The way to confirm Theophilus in his faith is to show the *sovereignly directed progress of the kingdom message* from Jewish rejection of Jesus as Messiah to Gentile acceptance.

Application: Have you recognized God’s sovereign leading in your life to bring you to Christ?

Luke

Introduction

I. **Title:** The Greek title (*Κατά Λυκᾶν According to Luke*) was added to this volume at a very early date. We know that Acts was a companion volume as both books address Theophilus (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1).

II. Authorship

A. **External Evidence:** The Church Fathers from the latter half of the second century agreed that Luke, “the beloved physician” (Col. 4:14), wrote this Gospel which bears his name:

1. The earliest evidence for Luke’s authorship stems from the Muratorian Canon and the Anti-Marcionite Prologue (both dated AD 160-200).
2. Others cite Luke as the author: Irenaeus (*Against Heresies*; ca. AD 185), Tertullian (*Against Marcion*; ca. AD 150-222), Clement of Alexandria (ca. AD 155-216), Origen (*Comm. on Matt.*; ca. AD 230, quoted by Eusebius), Eusebius, and Jerome (Hiebert, 1:114-17).

Luke is mentioned only three times in the New Testament (Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24). Since Paul lists his companions as Jews (Col. 4:10-11) then Gentiles (Col. 4:12-14), and Luke’s name appears among the latter group, he evidently was a Gentile, which is confirmed by his brilliant use of Greek and his phrase “their own language” (Acts 1:19). Tradition says that he came from Syrian Antioch, never married, and died at the age of eighty-four (*TTTB*, 327).

B. **Internal Evidence:** Support for Lukan authorship can be found in the book itself, especially when it is compared with Acts.

1. Several factors show that Luke and Acts had the same author: (a) Both are dedicated to the same man, Theophilus, (b) Acts 1:1 refers to “the first account,” which is most naturally understood as Luke’s Gospel, (c) The language and style of the two books are remarkably similar, and (d) Both books share many common interests (cp. “Characteristics” sections; cf. Guthrie, 100).
2. Acts has four first-person narratives often called the “we sections” (16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1–28:16) that show the author to be a close traveling companion of Paul. Of his traveling companions, only Titus and Luke are not mentioned by name in these sections and Titus has never been seriously considered as a candidate for the authorship of Acts (Hiebert, 1:119ff.).
3. Luke uses technical medical terms as expected by a doctor (Luke 4:38 vs. Mark 1:30; Luke 5:12 vs. Mark 1:40; Luke 8:43 vs. Mark 5:26, 29; Luke 4:35; 10:34ff.; 13:11; cf. Kümmel, 104).

III. Circumstances

A. **Date:** Acts ends with Paul’s two-year imprisonment, ending in AD 62, and Luke was written before Acts (cf. Acts 1:1). Luke probably wrote his gospel during Paul’s two-year imprisonment at Caesarea (AD June 57-August 59) as this period would have given Luke time to interview Paul and travel in Israel to gather information from eyewitnesses of Jesus’ ministry.

B. **Origin/Recipients:** Assuming the above scenario is correct, Luke wrote from Caesarea. However, others suggest Rome, Arabia, Asia Minor, and Alexandria. He clearly wrote to Theophilus (1:3), a man whose name means “lover of God,” but many verses show that a wider Gentile audience is also in view (Guthrie, 95; Hiebert, 1:130f.). Luke translates Aramaic terms, traces Christ’s genealogy back to Adam, refers to Roman rulers for dating,

avoids mentioning fulfillment of prophecies, quotes the Septuagint, and explains Jewish customs and Israel's geography. The title of "most excellent" for Theophilus (Luke 1:3) probably indicates that he was an official of some kind and as a man of high social standing he may have assumed responsibility for publishing Luke and Acts.

- C. **Occasion:** Theophilus considered Dr Luke a tremendous resource to give an orderly account of the life of Christ. He was well educated, an excellent historian, well acquainted with Paul, and as a single man able to travel and interview eyewitnesses. Luke probably wrote at Theophilus' request, but in any event, he purposed to strengthen the wealthy Christian's faith by showing that his faith rested on firm historical facts (1:3-4). Perhaps even more significantly, Luke sought to explain to his wider Gentile audience how Christ died for the entire world despite being a Jew. Unlike today, most westerners considered Christianity an eastern religion, so Luke wrote to say that "this easterner" (Jewish) Jesus was the universal Savior who could save westerners too.

IV. Characteristics

- A. The purpose of Luke's Gospel has many different views:

1. **Kingdom:** to explain God's orderly and sovereignly directed progress of the kingdom message from Jews to Gentiles to answer the natural question of any Gentile unbeliever, "How could a Jewish Savior be the Savior of the world?" This kingdom theme is evident in several ways:
 - a. The concept of the "kingdom" and the "kingdom of God" in Luke appears at least 42 times (e.g., 1:33; 4:43; 6:20; 7:28; 8:1, 10; 9:2, 11, 27, 60, 62; 10:9, 11; 11:2, 17, 18, 20; 12:31, 32; 13:18, 20, 28, 29; 14:15; 16:16; 17:20a, 20b, 21; 18:16, 17, 24, 25, 29; 19:11; 21:10, 31; 22:16, 18, 29, 30, 23:42, 51). In Acts it appears only eight times but the concept is throughout from the beginning (1:8) to the end (28:31) in three sections: the witness in Jerusalem (1:1-6:7), Judea and Samaria (6:8-8:40) and the uttermost parts (Acts 9-28).
 - b. Luke emphasizes sovereignty through God's control of all events despite obstacles (e.g., 1:13, 30-33; 2:1, 29; 13:31-35) and Acts emphasizes predestination (2:23; 4:28; 13:48).
 - c. Since Luke and Acts have the same author and the Gospel account has a strong kingdom emphasis, one would expect the same emphasis in Acts since it is a continuation of Luke's gospel. This emphasis does in fact exist.
 - d. Luke presents Christ as the "perfect man," not the *Jewish* man. "Luke's portrait of Jesus was ideally suited to the Greek mind. The Greek ideal was human excellence, the perfect individual. In his gospel Luke shows that Jesus fulfilled this ideal in the highest and most absolute sense" (Hiebert, 1:142). Jesus especially fulfills this role by using the title "Son of Man"—a title from Daniel 7:13-14 for the Messiah who will bring in the universal kingdom.
 - e. This kingdom view includes all of the following purposes except #7.
2. **Instructional/Edification:** to confirm Theophilus and other Gentile believers in their faith (1:4; *TTTB*, 328; Hiebert, 1:132-135).
3. **Soteriological/Evangelistic:** to present Christ to non-Christian Gentile readers as the perfect Son of Man who "came to seek and to save that which was lost" (19:10; *TTTB*, 328)
4. **Apologetic:** to show that Christianity was not a politically subversive sect but rather a universal movement (cf. Pilate's three announcements of Christ's innocence in 23:4, 14, 22; *TTTB*, 328)

5. Ecclesiastical: to “trace the development and distinction of the Church over and against Judaism” (Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke*, 60-62)
 6. Narration of History: to preserve “the record of the origin and growth of the early church” (Fitzmyer cited by Liefeld, *EBC*, 8:800)
 7. Conciliation: to solve an argument between Peter and Paul to show Paul's credentials equal with Peter's to defend Paul's apostleship (Baur and Tübingen School cited by Liefeld, *EBC*, 8:801)
- B. Luke wrote with superb style and structure, his book being the most literary of the four Gospels. The Greek syntax is the best in the New Testament.
- C. The universal message of the gospel is stressed more than in any other gospel. This is seen in the many references to Gentiles (2:32; 18:32; 21:24a, 24b; 22:25).
- D. Forgiveness holds a prominent place (3:3; 5:18-26; 6:37; 7:36-50; 11:4; 12:10; 17:3-4; 23:34; 24:47; cf. Martin, *BKC*, 2:201).
- E. A large emphasis is the Holy Spirit and his ministries (1:15, 35; 3:22; 4:1, 18; 10:21).
- F. Only Luke relates his account with events and persons of secular history (2:1-2; 3:1).
- G. This Gospel is by far the most comprehensive. It is the longest of the four, it starts with the earliest account (John's birth; 1:5-25, 39-45, 57-80) and ends later (with the ascension of Christ; cf. 24:50-53) which bridges his gospel account into the Book of Acts (1:1-11). Its comprehensiveness is also seen in the many parables and miracles not recorded in the other Gospels. Luke and Acts together comprise 2138 verses, or 28% of the New Testament. Since Paul wrote only 2033 verses, Luke wrote more than any other author in the New Testament (*TTTB*, 329).
- H. Luke has a special emphasis upon prayer as it records nine prayers of Christ—seven being unique to Luke (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 29; 22:32, 40-41).
- I. Money and material things are in Luke more than any other NT book (Martin, *BKC*, 2:201).
- J. The temple is mentioned frequently (1:8, 21-22; 2:27, 37, 41-51; 24:53).
- K. Luke emphasizes Christ's redemptive mission, often quoting and/or alluding to Isaiah 53 and 40–66 (22:37; 24:27, 44, 46).
- L. The prominence of glory abounds in relation to wonder and praise for miracles (5:25-26; cf. Acts 3:8-10) and for other events (1:46-55, 68-79; 2:13-14, 20, 28-32; 7:16; 10:21; 18:43; 19:37-38; cf. Liefeld, *EBC*, 8:811).
- M. “Luke noted the individual's place in coming to repentance. He stressed the action which must come from each individual who followed Jesus. Examples include Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary, Simeon, Anna, Martha, Mary, Simon, Levi, the centurion, the widow of Nain, Zacchaeus, and Joseph of Arimathea” (Martin, *BKC*, 2:201). Especially notable is his emphasis upon women (thirteen nowhere else mentioned in the NT), children, and angels.
- N. “Luke often spoke of the joy that accompanies faith and salvation (1:14; 8:13; 10:17; 13:17; 15:5, 9, 32; 19:6, 37)” (Martin, *BKC*, 2:201).
- O. Luke stresses the humanity of Christ in that the genealogy begins with Adam, the first man (3:37).
- P. Luke alludes to the Septuagint frequently (2:23-24; 3:4-6; 4:4, 8, 10-12, 18-19; 10:27; 18:20; 19:46; 20:17, 28, 37, 42-43; 22:37), although 7:27 is from neither the Septuagint nor the Masoretic text.

- Q. Promises regarding the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants are prominent (e.g., 1:54-55, 69, 72-73), and the New Covenant is mentioned once as well (22:20).
- R. If a Jew wrote Hebrews, then Luke-Acts remains the only book in the Bible written by a Gentile.
- S. Luke alone gives his sources used to write his account, of which there were three: (1) written records of oral traditions stemming from the apostles' teaching (1:1), (2) the apostles themselves (1:2), and (3) interviews with non-apostolic eyewitnesses—perhaps Mary, Elizabeth, John, and Mark (1:3).

Argument

Luke's Gospel is written *from* a Gentile mind *to* the Gentile mind to confirm Theophilus' faith (1:3), but also to answer how the Jewish Savior could be a Savior for Gentiles. Luke performs this task masterfully by tracing the divinely directed kingdom message from Jews to Gentiles. This is evident even in his introduction (1:1-4), which affirms that he has carefully investigated the facts—a concern any intellectual Gentile would want to know. Next, he documents the pre-public life of Christ through the infancy narratives and preparation for ministry, both of which show that from the beginning Christ came to save Gentiles (1:5–4:13). The bulk of the Gospel (4:14–21:38) records the history of Jesus' ministry of being rejected by Israel and turning to the Gentiles. This is true in his early Galilean ministry (4:14–9:50), even more so while en route to Jerusalem (9:51–19:27), but especially in Jerusalem itself (19:28–21:38), particularly at the temple (19:45–21:38). The height of Jewish rejection appears when Christ submits to the Father's will for him to die to provide salvation for Jew and Gentile alike (Luke 22–23), and this atoning death is authenticated in his resurrection, commission, and ascension as worthy of bringing to the nations (Luke 24). Therefore, since Israel has rejected its Messiah, all men can receive salvation by simple faith, a message that is continued in Luke's Book of Acts, which chronicles the kingdom message from its reception by Jerusalem Jews to Gentiles in the uttermost part of the Roman Empire.

Synthesis

Universal Savior ministers in sovereign kingdom progress

1:1-4

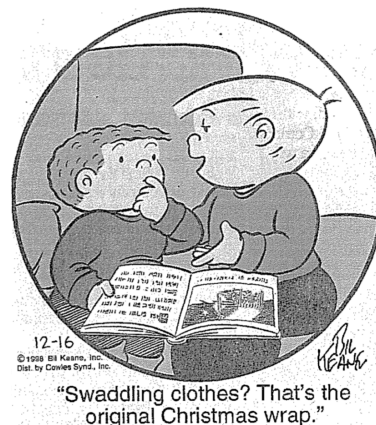
Sources

1:5–4:13

Pre-public life

1:5–2:52
 1:5-56
 1:57–2:20
 2:21-52
 3:1–4:13
 3:1-20
 3:21-22
 3:23-38
 4:1-13

Advent
 Announcements
 Births
 Early life
 Preparations
 John
 Baptism
 Genealogy
 Temptation



4:14–21:38

Ministry

4:14–9:50
 4:14-30
 4:31–6:16
 6:17-49
 7–8
 9:1-50
 9:51–19:27
 9:51–11:54
 12:1–19:27
 19:28–21:38
 19:28-44
 19:45–21:38
 19:45-48
 20:1–21:4
 21:5-38

Galilee
 Galilean acceptance vs. Nazareth rejection
 Authentication/discipleship
 Sermon on the Level Place
 Miracles/teachings
 Teaches dependence
 Lukan Travelogue
 Rejection
 Teaching
 Official presentation/rejection
 Triumphal Entry
 Temple ministry
 Second cleansing
 Confrontations
 Olivet Discourse

22–23	Passion
22:1-38	Passover
22:39-46	Gethsemane
22:47–23:25	Arrest/trials
23:26-56	Crucifixion

24	Final events
24:1-44	Resurrection/appearances
24:45-53	Commission/ascension

Outline

Summary Statement for the Book

The way to confirm Theophilus in his faith is to show the *sovereignly directed progress of the kingdom message* from Jewish rejection of Jesus as Messiah to Gentile acceptance.

- I. **Luke's sources were credible for skeptical Gentiles and to achieve his purpose to confirm the faith of Theophilus (1:1-4).**
 - A. Luke's formal, classical prologue informs Theophilus that he has reliable sources for this account of Christ's life in a chronological manner (1:1-3).
 - B. Luke's purpose in writing is to confirm the faith of Theophilus (and other Gentile Christians who would read the account) with historical, factual data (1:4).
- II. **Christ's pre-public life in his advent and ministry preparation shows God's orderly and sovereignly directed plan in a Semitic context but with universal overtones (1:5–4:13).**
 - A. Christ's advent in the infancy narratives of John and Jesus shows God sovereignly provided Jesus as Israel's Messiah, the world's Savior, and the Son of God (1:5–2:52).
 1. The announcements of the births of John and Jesus reveal in their Old Testament allusions that Jesus is truly Israel's Messiah (1:5-56).
 2. Miraculous births of John and Jesus show that God controls all things—from barren women to the dictates of kings—to give Israel's Messiah to the world (1:57–2:20).
 3. In the early life of Jesus, both Simeon and Jesus himself recognize him as Messiah of Israel, Savior of the world, and Son of God (2:21-52).
 - a) Simeon's prophecy of Jesus as a light to the Gentiles shows Gentile readers that Jesus is Israel's Messiah and the world's Savior (2:21-40).
 - b) Christ's teaching in the temple as a boy shows that from his youth, he was fully conscious of his identity as Son of God (2:41-52).
 - B. The ministry preparation of Jesus shows God's sovereign hand to give his Son who completely identifies with humanity for the world's salvation (3:1–4:13).
 1. John's ministry prepares the hearts of Israel through repentance so that Jesus might provide salvation for the world (3:1-20).
 2. The baptism of Jesus asserts God's sovereignty over his Son who pleases him (3:21-22).
 3. Christ's genealogy is traced through Mary back to Adam and God to indicate his humanity, his deity, and his universal offer of salvation (3:23-38).
 4. Christ's temptation by Satan records his refusal to gain people's acceptance without the cross as an example of waiting upon God's plan to save the world (4:1-13).

III. The Galilean ministry and route to Jerusalem show Israel rejecting Jesus as Messiah and his judgment by turning to Gentiles in the times of the Gentiles (4:14–21:38).

- A. Christ's ministry in Galilee is the first stage of Jewish rejection despite his miracles to prove he is Messiah in contrast to reception by Gentiles and his disciples (4:14–9:50).
1. Gentiles accepting Jesus in Galilee contrasts with Jewish rejection in Nazareth to foretell Jewish unbelief and Gentile reception to fulfill OT prophecy (4:14-30).
 2. Jesus' validation as the Son of Man (Messiah) comes in three alternating cycles of miracles and calling of disciples (4:31–6:16).
 3. Christ's Sermon on the Level Place omits Jewish parts of the Sermon on the Mount to show his discipleship teaching for Gentile readers (6:17-49).
 4. Christ's ministry to needs in and near Capernaum chronicles the kingdom expansion through his miracles and teaching to further show his identity as Messiah (Luke 7–8).
 5. Christ's teaching dependence upon himself to his disciples climaxes his Galilean ministry before he begins to approach Jerusalem (9:1-50).
- B. The Lukan Travelogue (Jesus rejected en route to Jerusalem) with his consequent teaching highlights the need for discipleship despite opposition (9:51–19:27).
1. Opposing Jesus increases as he is rejected by Samaria and accused of demonic power by Pharisees (9:51–11:54).

Note: Luke's travelogue has a chiasmic structure where themes reappear in reverse order later in the section (adapted from Charles Talbert, *Reading Luke*, 111-12).

- a. Approaching Heaven: Set Out for Jerusalem (9:51)
- b. Purpose for Coming: Samaritans and Salvation (9:52-56)
- c. Discipleship and Following (9:57-62)
- d. Rejection: 70 and Message of the Kingdom (10:1-24)
- e. Service and Rewards: Lawyer and Eternal Life (10:25-42)
- f. Prayer Principles Illustrated Through Children (11:1-13)
- g. Pharisees to Be Judged for Blasphemy (11:14-28)
- h. Resurrection: Sign of Jonah (11:29-36)
- i. Woes on the Pharisees (11:37-54)
2. Christ teaches via parables on various subjects in response to his rejection (12:1–19:27).
 - j. Money and Faithfulness: Discipleship and Rich Fool (12:1-34)
 - k. Parables of Readiness: Faithfulness (12:35-59)
 - l. Discipleship: Division (12:49-53)
 - m. Poor Judgments: Hypocrites (12:54-59)
 - n. Parable of Grace: Repentance (13:1-9)

- o. Healing a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath (13:10-17)
- p. Growth of the Kingdom: Universal Inclusion (13:18-21)*
- p.' Judgment on Israel: Jerusalem Rejection (13:22-35)*
- o.' Healing a Dropsy Man on the Sabbath (14:1-6)
- n.' Parables of Invitation: Humility (14:7-24)
- m.' Poor Judgments: Rejection (14:16-15)
- l.' Discipleship: Dedication (14:25-35)
- k.' Parables of Lost Sheep, Coin, and Son: Reconciliation (Luke 15)
- j.' Money and Faithfulness: Discipleship and Unjust Steward (16:1-13)
- i.' Condemnation on the Pharisees (16:14-18)
- h.' Resurrection: Rich Man and Lazarus (16:19-31)
- g.' Israel to Be Judged at the Second Advent (17:1-37)
- f.' Prayer Principles Illustrated Through Children (18:1-14)
- e.' Service and Rewards: Rich Young Ruler and Eternal Life (18:18-30)
- d.' Rejection: Announcement of Jerusalem (18:31-34)
- c.' Bartimaeus and Following (18:35-43)
- b.' Purpose for Coming: Zacchaeus and Salvation (19:1-10; 19:10 = Luke's Key Verse)
- a.' Approaching the Kingdom: Delay of Messianic Kingdom (19:11-27)

The above chiastic structure shows Luke 13:18-35 as the focus of the book (p & p'). Israel rejecting Christ was in God's sovereign plan to extend his salvation plan to Gentiles so that Christ would not only be a Jewish Savior but also the Savior of the world.

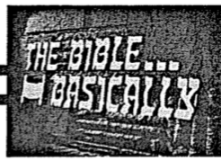
- C. Christ is rejected as Messiah in the Triumphal Entry in Jerusalem, so he predicts the temple destruction and Israel's judgment in the times of the Gentiles (19:28–21:38).
1. Jesus' official presentation as Israel's Messiah in the Triumphal Entry in Jerusalem fulfills Daniel 9:26 which prophesies his rejection (19:28-44).
 2. The temple teachers reject Jesus rebuking their greed so his Olivet Discourse predicts temple destruction and Israel's judgment in the times of the Gentiles (19:45–21:38).
 - a) Christ's second cleansing of the temple incident confirms that the nation has replaced spiritual life with materialistic pursuits (19:45-48).
 - b) Jesus' confrontations with the national leaders in the temple confirm their rejection of him as Messiah and that of the nation as a whole (20:1–21:4).
 - c) Christ's Olivet Discourse predicts Israel's judgment in the times of the Gentiles when Gentiles rule Jerusalem before his return (21:5-38).

- IV. The passion narrative shows Christ submitted to the Father as the innocent Passover Lamb whose death offers forgiveness and eternal life to all who believe (Luke 22–23).**
- A. The Passover Supper shows Christ as the Passover Lamb through whose blood the new covenant is established (22:1-38).
 - B. The agony of Jesus in Gethsemane affirms his difficult yet unmovable submission to the Father’s will to model true discipleship amidst difficulty (22:39-46).
 - C. Jesus’ arrest and trials repeatedly show him innocent of all charges leveled at him to confirm his sacrifice for the sins of the world—not his own sins (22:47–23:25).
 - D. The crucifixion of Jesus confirms his death as the basis for forgiveness and eternal life for all who believe—Jew and Gentile alike (23:26-56).
- V. Christ’s resurrection, commission, and ascension authenticate his ministry and atoning death as worthy of bringing to the nations (Luke 24).**
- A. The resurrection of Jesus and appearances on the Emmaus Road and to the Eleven prove him to be the Messiah who fulfilled the Scriptures (24:1-44).
 - B. The commission and ascension of Jesus commands the disciples to proclaim his salvation to the nations after the Spirit comes, thus bridging to Acts 1:1-11 (24:45-53).

The Genealogy of Jesus

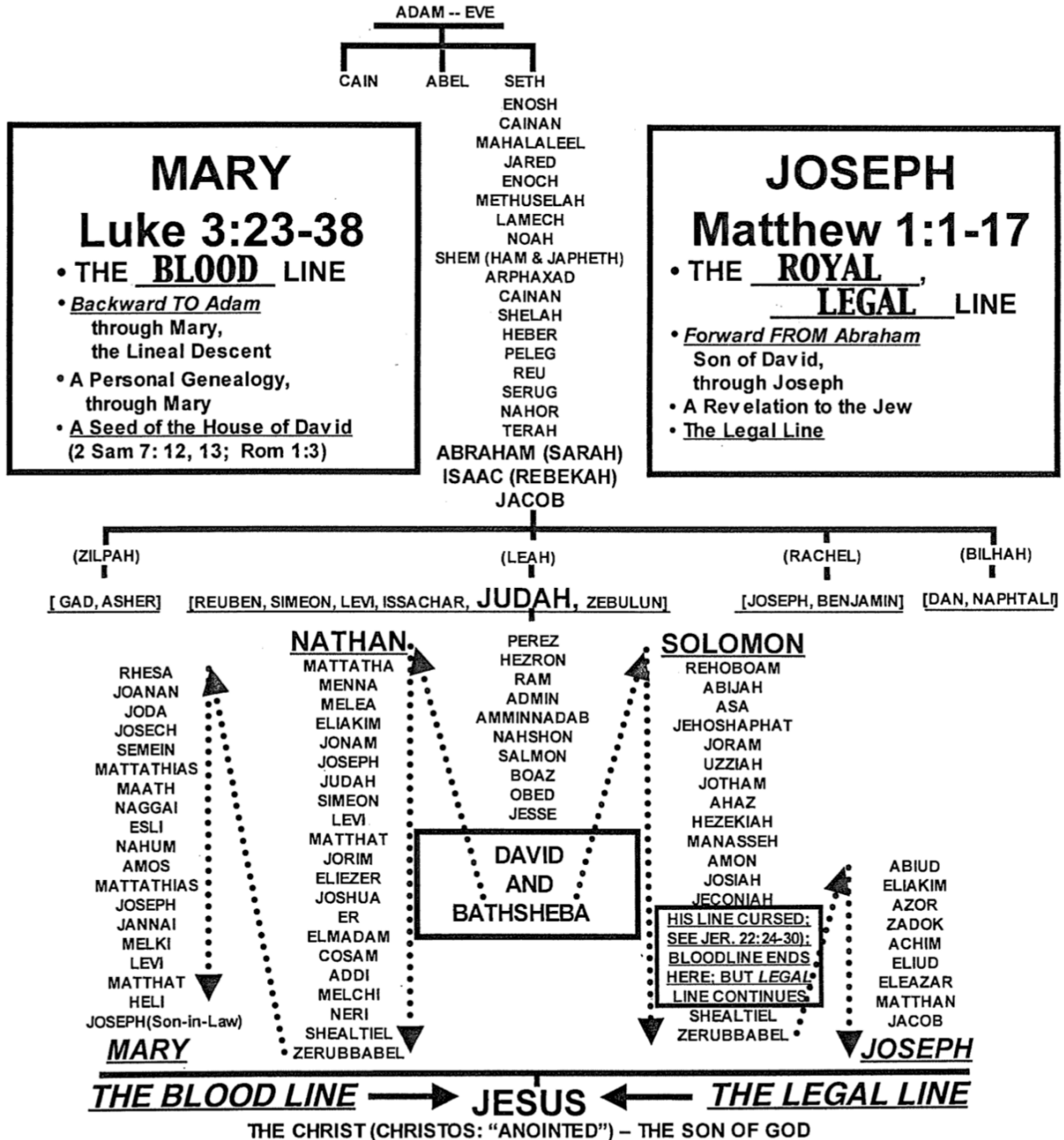
John Fryman, "The Bible... Basically" Seminar (Ft. Worth, 2004), Study Guide 16

Seminar Study Help Number 16



FROM ADAM TO CHRIST

THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST



Contrasting Genealogies by Matthew and Luke

Darrell Bock, *Luke*, 2 vols., Baker Exegetical Commentary on the NT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994-95), 918-22

The Genealogies of Matthew and Luke

6. In the stretch of names from Abraham to Jesus (i.e., where Luke and Matthew overlap), Matthew has forty-one names, while Luke has fifty-seven (Marshall 1978: 158). In the period from David to Jesus, there are only two points of overlap: Shealtiel and Zerubbabel.

All these differences have produced a myriad of solutions as to how the two lists relate to one another. In sum there are six basic approaches to this question:

1. Most opt for a literary and theological approach to this material, regarding any attempt at harmonization as impossible.³ In this view, both writers relate Jesus to Joseph without any recourse to historical material other than existing biblical materials from 1 Chronicles and Genesis. The point of each account is its theological connection. Matthew points to the king through David and Abraham, while Luke associates Jesus with all of humanity through Adam. Thus, this approach rejects the possibility of a solution. But other attempts to address the problem do exist.
2. Another common approach is to argue that Matthew gives the genealogy through Joseph, while Luke gives the genealogy through Mary (Hendriksen 1978: 222-25; Godet 1875: 1.201). Dating back to Annianus of Viterbo in 1490, the view argues that Joseph is not really in view in 3:23, where Luke says that Joseph was "supposed to be" (ἐνομιζέτο) Jesus' father. In addition, the absence of the article τοῦ before Joseph's name shows that he is not part of the genealogy. It is also argued that seeing Joseph in the genealogy puts Luke in a double contradiction in that he disagrees not only with Matthew, but also with himself, since he has already made clear that Jesus was born of the virgin Mary (1:27). Finally, it is argued that rabbinic tradition knows of the connection between Heli (also spelled Eli) and Mary.⁴ There are many problems with this approach. First, it is not at all clear that the rabbinic reference applies to Mary. In fact, most doubt that it does, because the Miriam referred to

3. Schürmann 1969: 200; Fitzmyer 1981: 496; Ernst 1977: 155; Lohse, *TDNT* 8:486 n. 49; Bovon 1989: 189 calls attempts at harmonization excessive rationalization like that in current fundamentalism. C. F. Evans 1990: 252 calls the task "impossible," which is excessively skeptical.

4. Y. Hög. 77d (= Neusner et al. 1982-93: 20.57-58); Geldenhuys 1951: 154; SB 2:155; Godet 1875: 1.202. Another reference is y. *Sarit*. 23c (38) (= Neusner et al. 1982-93: 31.182). If this view were correct, then the Protevangelium of James 1-5 is wrong to name Mary's father as Joachim. But the origin and value of this NT apocryphal tradition are uncertain.

Excursus 5 The Genealogies of Matthew and Luke (3:23-38)

Luke's genealogy differs from the one in Matthew at several levels (Fitzmyer 1981: 495-96; Liefeld 1984: 861; Aland 1985: §19; on the role of genealogies in Jewish culture, see Nolland 1989: 168-69):

1. Matthew goes from the oldest to the youngest generation, while Luke reverses this order. Matthew's order is the normal one for a genealogy, though Luke's has parallels with OT lists where ancestry is the issue (1 Chron. 6:33-38 [6:18-23 MT]; Nolland 1989: 168).
2. They have differing endpoints in the genealogy: Abraham in Matthew versus Adam in Luke.
3. Matthew will stop occasionally to explain the significance of an entry (Matt. 1:2, 5), while Luke never does.
4. Matthew's structure involves names given in three groups of fourteen each, a device that may involve an allusion to the numerics of David's name (Carson 1984: 69-70). On the other hand, Luke's structure seems to be eleven groups of seven names each, though the reason for this structure is not clear.¹ Marshall (1978: 160-61) discusses the suggestion that this structure represents the eleven weeks before the messianic twelfth week. However, he also observes that the scheme goes the wrong way for this point to be made, since the messianic week usually ends the sequence (2 Esdr. [= 4 Ezra] 14:11; 2 Bar. 27.1; 53.6; Apocalypse of Abraham 29.2). Also, the addition of the Son of God as a seventy-eighth name may overthrow this approach.²
5. Matthew lists some women (e.g., Rahab and Ruth), but Luke never does—an interesting difference given Luke's attention to women.

1. On NT structures with the use of "seven," see Rengstorf, *TDNT* 2:632 §B4d. On other points of Lucan structure, see Nolland 1989: 168 and Goulder 1989: 283-90.

2. Because the exact list of names is so uncertain and because Luke says nothing about the structure, one should be cautious about invoking such precise symbolism. Wiefel 1988: 97 seems to regard this twelfth-week view as possible. Schürmann 1969: 203 n. 119 argues that if it is present Luke is not conscious of it. Nolland 1989: 168 suggests that it was the point of Luke's source, whose order he reversed. But how can one know this? Goulder 1989: 284-85 is strongly supportive of this view, citing 1 Enoch 93.3-10 to stress that the form is to some extent artificial.

Contrasting Genealogies by Matthew and Luke

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The Genealogies of Matthew and Luke

approach argues that Jacob of Matt. 1:15 was childless and so Heli, who had Joseph as his physical son, became the heir. For this approach to work there must be another levirate marriage to Jacob's widow, since Matt. 1:16 seemingly has Jacob as Joseph's father, while Luke 3:23 says Joseph is the son of Heli.⁶ However, if Matthew's Jacob and Luke's Heli are brothers, then their father, listed as Matthat in Luke 3:24 and as Matthan in Matt. 1:15, must be the same person. But if these two men, Matthat and Matthan, are the same (as Machen reckons), then their fathers also differ, as the two genealogies note: Eleazar in Matt. 1:15 and Levi in Luke 3:24. Another levirate marriage is required or one must assume that the line through Eleazar became extinct.⁷ The introduction of an additional levirate marriage (or an extinct line) is too difficult for Carson (1984: 64–65). But he notes that R. Brown's criticism (1977: 503–4) of ways to harmonize the accounts ignores Machen's work. As one can see, this view is possible, but it is very complicated.

5. Carson (1984: 65) suggests that Matthat and Matthan are not the same person. Machen notes that this configuration requires that Jacob and Heli be half-brothers, a view Machen thinks is less likely. Carson thinks the pieces can fit. He says Levi (Luke 3:24) is the closest heir next to Jacob (Matt. 1:15–16).⁸ Carson's explanation can work, but only with an important correction: Levi is not the son of Matthat, Heli is (Luke 3:23).⁹ So Heli dies childless as the legal royal heir and is Joseph's uncle. Joseph is the physical son of Jacob by a sister of Heli, who now bears the line. This correction reverses the relationship between Matthew's and Luke's genealogies by going the opposite direction from what Carson suggests. If this configuration is correct, then Matthew gives the physical line and Luke gives the legal and "physical" line. Luke's line is "physical" through Heli's sister, who has legal claim to the line as the

6. Unless one approaches the question like Machen 1930: 207–9, who argues that Jacob and Heli were brothers, so Joseph was Jacob's nephew. When Jacob died childless, the nephew became heir.

7. Machen prefers the latter, a choice that Carson fails to mention in critiquing the view. Thus, Machen sees two childless fathers at the end of Matthew's list: Eleazar and Jacob.

8. For Carson, Levi is an only son; but his sister, who bears the line, marries Jacob. So when Levi dies childless, Joseph, the nephew, becomes the heir physically through Jacob and Levi's sister.

9. Carson appears to have read Luke in the wrong generational direction here or else this is a typo reading Levi in place of Heli. Carson (or his editor) is not the first to get tangled in the complex intersection of these genealogies, nor is he likely to be the last!

Excursus 5

there is not called the mother of Jesus and thus could be any Miriam.⁵ Second, the absence of the article τοῦ can be explained simply because Joseph starts the list. Third, the virgin birth does not prevent legal paternity from passing through the father (Gordon 1977). Thus, no contradiction with the virgin birth exists. Fourth, the most natural way to read the Greek is as a genealogy for Joseph (Carson 1984: 64), given that Mary is not named at all here and that the genitive τοῦ at the front of the list is masculine. To clearly bring in Mary, Luke could have named her and/or changed the opening genitive to a feminine, similar to Matt. 1:16 and its use of ἡς, which makes clear that the Matthean connection is only to Mary.

The remaining views all agree that Joseph's line is addressed by both Luke and Matthew. They disagree on how this is done.

3. The oldest known view is that of Julius Africanus (ca. A.D. 225; cited by Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 1.7), who suggests that Matthew provided the natural line, while Luke provided the royal line, and that the difference in the lists was caused by the principle of levirate marriage (Deut. 25:5–10). According to Julius, Matthan (Matt. 1:15) had a son, Jacob, by way of his wife, Estha. Matthan died and Estha married Melchi (Luke 3:24), who had a son, Heli (Luke 3:23). Heli died without children and his half-brother, Jacob, took his wife by levirate marriage, so that Jacob's sons were tied to Heli's line. In this way, Joseph could be lined up to each list: physically to Jacob but legally to Heli. The problem with this approach is that two names intervene in Luke's list between Heli and Melchi: Μαθθῆς (Matthat) and Λεβὶ (Levi). Such a connection is not impossible, given that Matthew's list is shorter than Luke's, but it is less than likely. Levirate marriage, though not common in the first century, was not completely unknown or else the theological inquiry of the Sadducees in Matt. 22:24–28 does not make sense (Carson 1984: 64; Nolland 1989: 169 [who rejects all levirate-marriage solutions]; M. Johnson 1969: 144–45).

4. A modern variation of this ancient view reverses the focus: Luke gives the physical descent and Matthew the royal descent. Tied to the work of A. Hervey in 1853 and modified by Machen, this approach notes that ancient Judaism argued for a multiple line for David (Tg. Zech. 12:12; Marshall 1978: 158; Machen 1930: 207–9; Hill 1972: 75). The simplest form of this

5. SB 2:155 gives it only a "perhaps," while Geldenhuys 1951: 154 rejects it.

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nearest relative to Heli. The only problem with this approach through the sister is, How can Joseph then be called the "son" of Heli, since he is not the physical father and a levirate marriage is not present? The genealogy must be seen simply as "legal" at this point, but that is also the only way that Jesus enters in when one assumes a virgin birth, which both Matt. 1:16 and Luke 1:27-35 acknowledge. Another option is that the wife of the childless Heli married Jacob, in which case Joseph was physically born through Jacob, but has ties to the throne also by levirate connections to Heli, his "father." This latter configuration seems the best possibility within this approach.

6. Still another option is noted by Nolland (1989: 170, drawing on U. Holzmeister), who argues that Mary is an heiress of Eli, since she had no brothers. Eli adopted Joseph as son upon marriage, as in other cases where a father had no physical son (Ezra 2:61; Neh. 7:63; see also Num. 27:1-11 [which establishes lines of inheritance]; 1 Chron. 2:34-35). Luke's genealogy reflects adoption. On this basis, the line again becomes "legal" versus physical at this endpoint.

Luke's line may also be the legal one because of the curse of Jeconiah (Jer. 22:30), whose name appears in Matthew but not in Luke. What complicates this particular suggestion about Jeconiah is that Zerubbabel receives the signet ring again, according to Hag. 2:23, an act that probably reverses the Jeconiah curse. At the least, Luke's genealogy excludes Jeconiah from any recognition. So, the Lucan omission could be seen as wiping Jeconiah's memory from the official legal list because of the curse. While one's paternity cannot be denied, one can lose legal right to the inherited line.¹⁰ What emerges from both evangelists' genealogies is that Jesus belongs on the throne no matter which route one takes. Both the physical route and the legal route lead to Jesus.

A clear choice is difficult to establish between the various views that see Joseph's line as present in both Gospels. Views 3-6 are all possible, yet each requires a set of conjectures that cannot be proven. What seems most likely, if one is to take the accounts as historical, is that Jacob (Matt. 1:15-16) and Heli (Luke 3:23) had a close

relationship, though whether as brothers, half-brothers, through the marriage of Heli's sister to Jacob, levirate marriage, or adoption is less clear. It is also clear that other breaks in the listing occurred. What the options show is that it is premature to insist on error here, even though a definite solution does not emerge. Nevertheless, the genealogy's point is obvious. Jesus has a claim to the throne through David and is related to all of humanity through Adam.

10. The twentieth-century English Duke of Windsor, Edward VIII, is a classic, similar contemporary illustration of this truth, though he had no children. A closer analogy would be William's becoming king in place of his father, if Charles were to become disqualified for the throne. So then, Luke did not need Nathan to make this point (Nolland 1989: 170, 172, who is for the influence of the Jeconian curse on Luke, so that the evangelist sends the genealogy through Nathan rather than through Solomon).

HOW WOULD YOU HANDLE A MIRACLE?

"What would it take for you to believe that Jesus is God made man?" I asked my schoolmate years ago. "If God would just do a miracle just for me, I would believe!" he said.

However, miracles often do not lead to belief. Take the Christmas story, for example. We often credit the account with only one miraculous birth, while in fact there were two miraculous births—and they did not always lead to belief on the part of the witnesses.



MIRACULOUS BIRTH #1: ZECHARIAH'S SON

One would expect the aged, godly Zechariah to be the first to believe in a miracle. After all, he had seen God's good hand in his life for decades. As a faithful priest, year after year he had the privilege of offering sacrifices and worshipping the Lord at the temple.

One day he had an even greater privilege—the chance to enter the Holy Place to offer incense on the altar next to the Holy of Holies. Yet there, to his amazement, the angel Gabriel appeared to him! The angel announced that his wife Elizabeth would bear a son—and not just any son. Their son would actually prepare the people to accept the Messiah himself, who would follow shortly after their son, John.

Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure this will happen? I'm an old man now, and my wife is also well along in years" (Luke 1:18 NLT).

Imagine that! Imagine telling God's angel that he cannot deliver on what he says. "Then the angel said, 'I am Gabriel! I stand in the very presence of God. It was he who sent me to bring you this good news! But now, since you didn't believe what I said, you will be silent and unable to speak until the child is born. For my words will certainly be fulfilled at the proper time'" (1:19-20).

So here God predicted a miraculous birth since Elizabeth "could not" have a baby. In fact, as a barren woman, she couldn't bear a child even in her younger years. (continued above)

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

The Christmas story comes to us every year with the regularity of Singapore's constant rain. Perhaps we have a similar attitude to Christmas as we do to the rain. Though we need water for life itself, when it falls at inconvenient times we complain about it falling from the heavens.

The two births of Advent are miraculous yet inconvenient. We can too easily lose the wonder of the stories similar to Zechariah who missed the wonder of John's birth due to his doubt. This resulted in months of inability to speak God's praises.

MIRACULOUS BIRTH #2: MARY'S SON

Unlike Zechariah, the "seasoned" man of God, young Mary was a "newbie." Only a teenager, she was faithful to God, but had fewer years to see God's faithfulness to her. The miraculous conception of John the Baptist gave Elizabeth great amazement, but the miraculous conception of Jesus gave Mary great alarm. "Who would ever believe that I am the first virgin to give birth?" Mary could have thought.

But how did Mary respond to this wonderful yet rather inconvenient news? Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin" (1:34). These were not words of doubt. It was a request for clarity on God's method. Her humility was seen in her response, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true..." (1:38).

Further, when God explained that Mary's conception would occur through the Holy Spirit, she did not end up dumb like Zechariah. Unlike Zechariah's mouth being closed, Mary's mouth was opened even further for prophecy! After visiting her cousin Elizabeth, Mary uttered one of the most amazing and theologically significant statements of God reaching down to man in Scripture (1:46-55).

CONTRASTS BETWEEN TWO ANNOUNCEMENTS

	Zechariah	Mary
Miracle	"Too old" for a baby	"Too young" for a baby
Answer	"How can I be sure?"	"How can this happen?"
Confusion	Doubted God's word	Asked God's method
Result	Ended up dumb	Ended up uttering praise
Disgrace	Removed after birth	Caused by birth

We should imitate Mary instead. She lacked Zechariah's many years of godly living, yet in humility she accepted God's inconvenient but marvelous plan for her to be humanity's one and only virgin mother. As a result, God loosed her tongue to praise His name.

May we also believe these miracles and praise God before others in response.



Rev Dr Rick Griffith
 Director
 Doctor of Ministry

Parables of Jesus

Bible Visual Resource Book, 199

Luke

Parables of Jesus

	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Lamp under a bowl	5:14-15	4:21-22	8:16; 11:33
Wise and foolish builders	7:24-27		6:47-49
New cloth on an old coat	9:16	2:21	5:36
New wine in old wineskins	9:17	2:22	5:37-38
Sower and the soils	13:3-8,18-23	4:3-8,14-20	8:5-8,11-15
Weeds	13:24-30, 36-43		
Mustard seed	13:31-32	4:30-32	13:18-19
Yeast	13:33		13:20-21
Hidden treasure	13:44		
Valuable pearl	13:45-46		
Net	13:47-50		
Owner of a house	13:52		
Lost sheep	18:12-14		15:4-7
Unmerciful servant	18:23-34		
Workers in the vineyard	20:1-16		
Two sons	21:28-32		
Tenants	21:33-44	12:1-11	20:9-18
Wedding banquet	22:2-14		
Fig tree	24:32-35	13:28-29	21:29-31
Faithful and wise servant	24:45-51		12:42-48
Ten virgins	25:1-13		
Talents (minas)	25:14-30		19:12-27
Sheep and goats	25:31-46		
Growing seed		4:26-29	
Watchful servants		13:35-37	12:35-40
Moneylender			7:41-43
Good Samaritan			10:30-37
Friend in need			11:5-8
Rich fool			12:16-21
Unfruitful fig tree			13:6-9
Lowest seat at the feast			14:7-14
Great banquet			14:16-24
Cost of discipleship			14:28-33
Lost coin			15:8-10
Lost (prodigal) son			15:11-32
Shrewd manager			16:1-8
Rich man and Lazarus			16:19-31
Master and his servant			17:7-10
Persistent widow			18:2-8
Pharisee and tax collector			18:10-14

A Prodigal Returns

A First-Century Monologue of the Lost Son of Luke 15:11-31

(A man in tattered first-century garb walks wearily to the front of the audience.)

I. Problems at Home

- A. At times we don't *like* our brothers or sisters—but my problem was worse than that. I *hated* my older brother. *Always* hard working. *Always* submissive to Dad. *Always*... Mr. Right.
- B. Not only that, there's this custom called the birthright. This means the oldest son gets twice as much inheritance. That left two thirds for him, and only one third for me. As if I didn't have enough problems already!
- C. So, I told Dad, "Father, give me my share of the estate." This was a lot to ask. Imagine giving away a third of your business and then try to survive against the competition!
- D. But Father didn't argue. With a grieved heart, he just gave me my share.

II. Problems Away

- A. Pretty soon I gathered all that money and everything I had—and I headed far away for a good time. It wasn't hard to leave because I hated my brother and had no friends at home.
- B. Hmm, interesting. I discovered that in the distant land, all of a sudden, I had *plenty* of friends! Drinks were on me! The wild women noticed my wealth too. It didn't take long for all my wealth to transfer over to them and I became the one in need.
- C. Just when my "friends" disappeared, so did the food. A *real* tough famine came. I had never known hunger before, so my stomach pains were really intense.
- D. But I got a job—if you can call it that—for a Gentile! A *Gentile*! He had me raise *pigs*—that's as low as a good Jewish boy like me can get. My boss hadn't paid me yet, so even the pods I threw to these unclean animals looked tasty after a while!
- E. Then a thought hit me, "Even my Dad's *servants* don't go hungry like this! Yet here I am, *starving* to death! I'll return to him and say, 'Father, I've sinned against God and sinned against you. I don't ever deserve to be called your son again. Take me as a hired hand.'"

III. My Return

- A. On the long journey back home, I rehearsed my speech many times—not that I thought he'd reject me, but I wanted to say it just right.
- B. As I approached my house, I wondered which servant I'd see first in the fields. Would it be Eliab? Jonadab? But no, it was my Father himself—still watching for me! He *ran* to me and I didn't know what to expect. It looked like he would give me a punch in my hungry stomach—but then he gave me a great bear hug! He kissed me over and over so much I almost forgot my speech.
- C. Then it came to me: "Father, I've sinned against God and sinned against you. I don't ever deserve to be called your son again."

- D. Before I could get to the “take me as a hired hand” part my Dad was shouting to the servants, “Hey, Eliab! Jonadab! Quick! Bring the nice robe. Put the family ring on his finger and sandals on his feet! Roast that fat heifer! It’s feast time tonight! My younger son was dead but now has come back to life! He was lost and now is found!”

IV. Conclusion

- A. So, they did it. I never knew my Dad could party like that.
- B. The grand feast happened so fast that they forgot to invite my brother. But he heard the music from the fields and, soon enough, he found out about it, stalking off in anger. Dad himself went out to the fields and begged him to come in.
- C. Then he gave Father his own speech: “Look how many years I’ve *slaved* for you, never giving you a moment of grief. But have you ever thrown a party for my friends and me? No! Yet this idiot son of yours wastes your money on whores and you whoop it up with a feast?!”
- D. Father had the last word though: “Son, you are with me now and the whole inheritance is yours. But we *have* to celebrate! Your brother was dead but is alive now! He was lost but now is found!”

How to Get a Camel Through the Eye of a Needle (Luke 18:25)

I. The Problem

- A. Jesus once encountered a rich young ruler who asked what he could do to inherit eternal life. Christ told him to sell everything and follow him, but the man went away sad as he was unwilling to part with his wealth.
- B. Christ then responded with a proverb that “it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” This saying is so important that each Synoptic writer records it (Matt. 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25).
- C. The problem we encounter is that Jesus appears to claim that no rich person can be saved—and yet each of us knows at least *some* wealthy believers! Are these people actually not Christians (!) or could we be misunderstanding what Jesus meant?

II. Proposed Mistranslations

- A. Change the Camel: One solution to the severity of this proverb is to suppose that copyists confused the Greek words for “camel” and “cable” since they differ only by one letter (*kamelon* and *kamilon*, respectively). In this view, Jesus would be saying that threading a *cable* through a needle is certainly harder than using thread, but at least it is still possible—if the needle is large enough! However, though a few manuscripts do read “cable,” thousands of others render it “camel,” including the best and earliest manuscripts.¹
- B. Change the Needle: The more popular response has been that the “needle” referred to here is not a literal sewing needle but rather a gate in Jerusalem. The gate was so small that camels had to crawl through on their knees. Many commentaries have followed this interpretation over the years. This second explanation appears to solve the problem, allowing rich people to get into heaven, while at the same time acknowledging that their riches do make it difficult for them to submit to the point of accepting Christ.

III. Problems with the Needle Gate View

- A. No archaeological dig has ever found such a gate. We also have no sources that ever mention it as a possibility before AD 1100. While lack of evidence does not disprove the existence of a biblical event, when a literal understanding makes complete sense (i.e., an actual needle), one should reject other unsupported options that arise a millennium later.
- B. The theology of a camel actually being able to enter a “needle” makes Jesus say exactly the opposite of his intent. The rich man held to the prevailing view of salvation by works (“what good thing must I *do* to obtain eternal life?” in Matt. 19:16). Jesus challenged his obedience to God’s commandments by telling him to give everything away to follow him. This meant that no one can trust in his wealth and also enter heaven. Another common belief was that riches showed God’s approval and a righteous life (= salvation).² However, the “Needle Gate” hypothesis teaches that one can take his riches with him after his possessions are removed from the camel’s back long enough to get the camel through. (Obviously, no one would leave his treasures

¹ The UBS4 Greek textual apparatus cites only seventeen late sources for “cable” (e.g., ϵ^1 180 579 1010 1424 ten lectionaries Cyril [AD 444] Arminian [Georgian version]) while “camel” has evidence from thousands of the earlier and better sources, including \aleph (Sinaiticus, 4th cent.), A (Alexandrinus, 5th cent.), and B (Vaticanus, 4th cent.).

² The Pharisees were wealthy, so people reasoned that Pharisees must also be godly, but Jesus taught that people’s righteousness must surpass Pharisaical standards (Matt. 5:20). Becoming right with God came only by hearing and acting upon Christ’s words as a foundation (Matt. 7:24), both of which came by faith.

outside the gate, but would haul them into the city only to place them on the back of his camel again.) This false theology is refuted by the NT scholar Bruner:

The vice of the teaching that says “the needle’s eye is a low gate in the Middle East that camels must stoop to enter” is that it tells the well-to-do that by acts of humility they can get into the kingdom, that they can keep their comforts and even continue their drive for financial enrichment if they will only be a little humbler in the process. This teaching turns Jesus’ teaching on its head—it teaches how to be covetous and Christian at the same time. “The fact that such minimizing interpretations [as the cable or the gate] have been thought up is itself an eloquent comment on the passage” (Nineham, 275).³

- C. Not only was a “Needle Gate” never known in the time of Jesus or discovered later, this view is not known to be earlier than the time of Anselm, who served as Archbishop of Canterbury from AD 1093-1109. Bruner notes that this medieval gloss by Anselm “lives on still in countless sermons. Luz, 3:128n.59 comments appropriately: ‘More interesting than this misinterpretation is the question, Why has it remained so popular!’”⁴
- D. The NET Bible[®] notes, “The *eye of a needle* refers to a sewing needle. (The gate in Jerusalem known as ‘The Needle’s Eye’ was built during the middle ages and was not in existence in Jesus’ day.) Jesus was saying rhetorically that it is impossible for a rich person to enter God’s kingdom, unless God (v. 26) intervenes.”⁵ Evidently Christians named their newly built gate after Jesus’ saying, though their exegesis was wrong. Sadly, the gate built 1100 years *after* Christ has since been used to *interpret* Christ!

IV. Conclusion

Interestingly, a small door within a city wall does exist today in Rothenburg, Germany. In fact, it is called the “Eye of the Needle.” One tourist notes,

The town of Rothenburg, Germany began with the construction of its first castle in 970. In 1142 the imperial castle was erected by King Conrad III.... At night, the town was locked up tight. If you stayed out too late, you had to identify yourself to the guards. If they believed you *were* who you *said* you were, they would let you enter the “Eye of the Needle” for a fee.⁶

However, no door of the sort existed in Jerusalem during the time of Jesus. We must reject this legend and accept this difficult saying of Jesus as it appears—that it is not only difficult but *impossible* for the rich to get into heaven by their money or good works.

³ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew, a Commentary: Matthew 13-28*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 305. Also arguing against the needle gate are Craig Blomberg, *Matthew* (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 299; Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 2:1485; John A. Martin, “Luke,” *Bible Knowledge Commentary: NT* (Wheaton: Victor, 1983), 251; Walter W. Wessel, “Mark,” *Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 8:716; Robert L. Thomas, “Needle’s Eye,” *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 4:402; James A. Patch, “Needle,” *International Standard Bible Dictionary*; “Needle,” *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*; Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 3d ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 25.

⁴ Bruner, 306; he also cites the Anselm gloss as in *C.A. (Cosmological Argument?)*, 670. D. A. Carson, “Matthew,” *Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 8:425 notes that this “misguided... conjecture may come from some of Jerome’s allegorizing (cf. Broadus).”

⁵ See the NET Bible[®] footnote 31 on Luke 18:25 (emphasis theirs).

⁶ See the account and picture by Mr. Sedivy (Highlands Ranch High School history teacher in Colorado) at http://members.tripod.com/~mr_sedivy/roth_tour.html. This is also noted in the official Rothenburg site at <http://www.romanticroad.com/rothsigh.htm>.

Principles of Discipleship from the Lukan Travelogue (Luke 9:51–19:27)

Mark L. Bailey, Dallas Theological Seminary (1 of 2)

- A. The rejection was a necessary step in the glorification of Jesus Christ (9:51).
- B. The purpose of Christ's ministry was salvation rather than judgment (9:52-56).
- C. Discipleship demands wholehearted dedication to Christ and His kingdom (9:57-62).
- D. The method of the ministry is people and a negative response is the basis of condemnation (10:1-24).
- E. A right relationship to God is evidenced by a commitment to the priority commands of the Law (10:25-37). [Loving God (Mary) and neighbor (Samaritan)]
- F. God responds to persistent prayer because He is a loving Father (11:1-13).
- G. There is a need for faith and obedience in light of the world's view of Christ (11:14-28).
- H. The resurrection is the ultimate testimony to the superiority of Christ (11:29-36).
- I. Pharisaical hypocrisy blinds one to the truth of salvation and righteousness (11:37-54).
- J. The realities of life go far beyond the external and material pursuits of the present (12:1-34).
- K. Since the return of Christ is certain, and the time is unknown, true discipleship should be characterized by watchfulness and faithfulness (12:35-48).
- L. Dedicated discipleship may bring a division between people with differing priorities (12:49-53).
- M. Hypocrites are the victims of poor value judgments which ultimately result in their condemnation (12:54-59).
- N. God's grace is extended to prompt repentance (13:1-9).
- O. Sometimes sickness is the result of satanic influences (13:10-17).
- P. The kingdom of God extends to universal proportions (13:18-21).
 - 1. The mustard seed:

 - 2. The leavening process:

Principles of Discipleship from the Lukan Travelogue (Luke 9:51–19:27)

Mark L. Bailey, Dallas Theological Seminary (2 of 2)

P' Universal inclusion in God's kingdom was made possible by the historical rejection of Christ by Israel (8:22-35).

- 1. Rejection of Christ by Israel came in like manner as the prophets*
- 2. Judgment is predicted upon the house (nation)*
- 3. Israel will not see Christ again until He has left and returned*

O' Human need takes precedent over ritualistic observance (14:1-6).

N' Humility and grace are the evidences of righteousness (14:7-14).

M' Selfish rejection of God's gracious invitation will result in exclusion from the messianic blessings of the kingdom (14:15-24).

L' Total commitment is the prerequisite cost of true biblical discipleship (14:25-35).

K' Christ shares the Father's loving concern for the lost and rejoices with heaven over every repentant sinner (15:1-32).

J' Faithfulness with earthly money will result in both relationships and riches for eternity (16:1-13).

I' Self-justification violates the principles of God's righteousness (16:14-18).

H' The Word of God is the only adequate basis for faith which can guarantee eternal life (16:19-31).

G' A right response to Christ is the only adequate escape from the coming judgment at the return of Christ to the earth (17:1-37).

F' There is a need to be persistent but not proud in prayer (18:1-17).

E' While riches can hinder entrance into God's kingdom, both temporal and eternal rewards are promised to those who sacrificially follow Christ (18:18-30).

D' The death of Christ at the hands of both the Jews and Gentiles accomplished the prophesied plan of God (18:31-34).

C' True discipleship means following Jesus Christ from a life of faith (18:35-43).

B' Righteous obedience is the evidence of salvation (19:1-10).

A' While the messianic kingdom has been delayed, the responsibilities of present stewardship haven't (19:11-27).

The Crucifixion of Jesus

(1 of 5)

Original Articles



C. Truman Davis, M.D., M.S.

The Crucifixion of Jesus

The Passion of Christ from a Medical Point of View

I N this paper, I shall discuss some of the physical aspects of the passion, or suffering, of Jesus Christ. We shall follow Him from Gesthemane, through His trial, His scourging, His path along the Via Dolorosa, to His last dying hours on the cross.

I became interested in this about a year ago when I read an account of the crucifixion in Jim Bishop's book, *The Day Christ Died*. I suddenly realized that I had taken the Crucifixion more or less for granted all these years—that I had grown callous to its horror by a too easy familiarity with the grim details—and a too distant friendship with Him. It finally occurred to me that as a physician I didn't even know the actual immediate cause of death. The Gospel writers don't help us very much on this point, because crucifixion and scourging were so common during their lifetime that they undoubtedly considered a detailed description totally superfluous—so we have the concise words of the Evangelists: "Pilate, having scourged Jesus, delivered Him to them to be crucified—and they crucified Him."

I am indebted to many who have studied this subject in the past, and especially to a contemporary colleague, Dr. Pierre Barbet, a French surgeon who has done exhaustive historical and experimental research and has written extensively on the subject.

The infinite psychic and spiritual suffering of the Incarnate God in atonement for the sins of fallen man I have no competence to discuss; however, the physiological and anatomical aspects of our Lord's passion we can examine in some detail . . . what did the body of Jesus of Nazareth actually endure during those hours of torture?

This led me first to a study of the practice of crucifixion itself; that is, the torture and execution of a person by fixation to a cross. Apparently, the first known practice of crucifixion was by the Persians. Alexander and his generals brought it back to the Mediterranean world—to Egypt and to Carthage. The Romans apparently learned the practice from the Carthaginians and (as with almost everything the Romans did) rapidly developed a very high degree of effi-

The Crucifixion of Jesus (2 of 5)

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ciency and skill in carrying it out. A number of Roman authors (Livy, Cicero, Tacitus) comment on it. Several innovations and modifications are described in the ancient literature; I'll mention only a few which may have some bearing here. The upright portion of the cross (or stipes) could have the cross-arm (or patibulum) attached two or three feet below its top—this is what we commonly think of today as the classical form, of the cross (the one which we have later named the Latin cross); however, the common form used in our Lord's day was the Tau cross (shaped like the Greek letter Tau or like our T). In this cross the patibulum was placed in a notch at the top of the stipes. There is fairly overwhelming archeological evidence that it was on this type of cross that Jesus was crucified.

The upright post, or stipes, was generally permanently fixed in the ground at the site of execution and the condemned man was forced to carry the patibulum, apparently weighing about 110 pounds, from the prison to the place of execution. Without any historical or biblical proof, medieval and Renaissance painters have given us our picture of Christ carrying the entire cross. Many of these painters and most of the sculptors of crucifixes today show the nails through the palms. Roman historical accounts and experimental work have shown that the nails were driven between the small bones of the wrists and not through the palms. Nails driven through the palms will strip out between the fingers when they support the weight of a human body. The misconception may have come about through a misunderstanding of Jesus' words to Thomas, "Observe my hands." Anatomists, both modern and ancient, have always considered the wrists as part of the hand.

A titulus, or small sign, stating the victim's crime was usually carried at the front of the procession and later nailed to the cross above the head. This sign with its staff nailed to the top of the cross would have given it somewhat the characteristic form of the Latin cross.

The physical passion of the Christ begins in Gethsemane. Of the many aspects of this initial suffering, I shall only discuss the one of physiological interest; the bloody sweat. It is interesting that the physician of the group, St. Luke, is the only one to mention this. He says, "And being in agony, He prayed the longer. And his

sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground."

Every attempt imaginable has been used by modern scholars to explain away this phase, apparently under the mistaken impression that this just doesn't happen.

A great deal of effort could be saved by consulting the medical literature. Though very rare, the phenomenon of Hematidrosis, or bloody sweat, is well documented. Under great emotional stress, tiny capillaries in the sweat glands can break, thus mixing blood with sweat. This process alone could have produced marked weakness and possible shock.

We shall move rapidly through the betrayal and arrest; I must stress again that important portions of the Passion story are missing from this account. This may be frustrating to you, but in order to adhere to our purpose of discussing only the purely physical aspects of the Passion, this is necessary. After the arrest in the middle of the night, Jesus was brought before the Sanhedrin and Caiphus, the High Priest; it is here that the first physical trauma was inflicted. A soldier struck Jesus across the face for remaining silent when questioned by Caiphus. The palace guards then blindfolded Him and mockingly taunted Him to identify them as they each passed by, spat on Him, and struck Him in the face.

In the early morning, Jesus, battered and bruised, dehydrated, and exhausted from a sleepless night, is taken across Jerusalem to the Praetorium of the Fortress Antonia, the seat of government of the Procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate. You are, of course, familiar with Pilate's action in attempting to pass responsibility to Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Judea. Jesus apparently suffered no physical mistreatment at the hands of Herod and was returned to Pilate. It was then, in response to the cries of the mob, that Pilate ordered Bar-Abbas released and condemned Jesus to scourging and crucifixion. There is much disagreement among authorities about scourging as a prelude to crucifixion. Most Roman writers from this period do not associate the two. Many scholars believe that Pilate originally ordered Jesus scourged as his full punishment and that the death sentence by crucifixion came only in response to the taunt by the mob that the Procurator was not properly defending Caesar against this pretender who

The Crucifixion of Jesus (3 of 5)

Original Articles

claimed to be the King of the Jews.

Preparations for the scourging are carried out. The prisoner is stripped of His clothing and His hands tied to a post above His head. It is doubtful whether the Romans made any attempt to follow the Jewish law in this matter of scourging. The Jews had an ancient law prohibiting more than forty lashes. The Pharisees, always making sure that the law was strictly kept, insisted that only thirty-nine lashes be given. (In case of a miscount, they were sure of remaining within the law.) The Roman legionnaire steps forward with the flagrum (or flagellum) in his hand. This is a short whip consisting of several heavy, leather thongs with two small balls of lead attached near the ends of each. (FIGURE 1.) The heavy whip is brought down with full force again and again across Jesus' shoulders, back and legs. At first the heavy thongs cut through the skin only. Then, as the blows continue, they cut deeper into the subcutaneous tissues, producing first an oozing of blood from the capillaries and veins of the skin, and finally spurting arterial bleeding from vessels in the underlying muscles. The small balls of lead first produce large, deep bruises which are broken open by subsequent blows. Finally the skin of the back is hanging

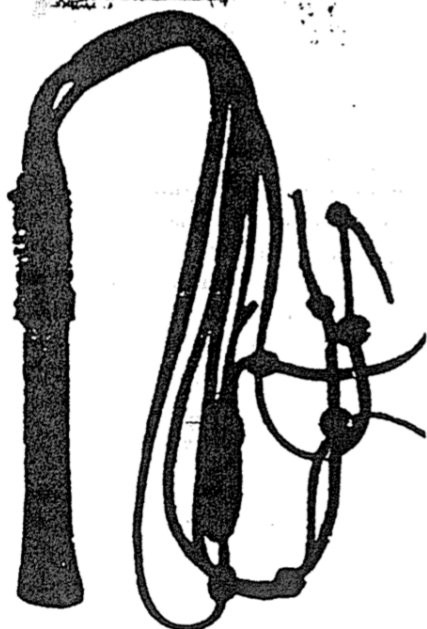


Figure 1



Figure 2

in long ribbons and the entire area is an unrecognizable mass of torn, bleeding tissue. When it is determined by the centurion in charge that the prisoner is near death, the beating is finally stopped.

The half-fainting Jesus is then untied and allowed to slump to the stone pavement, wet with His own blood. The Roman soldiers see a great joke in this provincial Jew claiming to be a king. They throw a robe across His shoulders and place a stick in His hand for a scepter. They still need a crown to make their travesty complete. A small bundle of flexible branches covered with long thorns (commonly used for firewood) are plaited into the shape of a crown and this is pressed into His scalp. (FIGURE 2.) Again there is copious bleeding (the scalp being one of the most vascular areas of the body.) After mocking Him and striking Him across the face, the soldiers take the stick from His hand and strike Him across the head, driving the thorns deeper into His scalp. Finally, they tire of their sadistic sport and the robe is torn from His back. This had already become adherent to the clots of blood and serum in the wounds, and its removal, just as in the careless removal of a surgical bandage, causes excruciating pain . . . Almost as though

The Crucifixion of Jesus (4 of 5)

Original Articles

He were again being whipped—and the wounds again begin to bleed.

In deference to Jewish custom, the Romans return His garments. The heavy patibulum of the cross is tied across His shoulders, and the procession of the condemned Christ, two thieves and the execution detail of Roman soldiers, headed by a centurian, begins its slow journey along the Via Dolorosa. In spite of His efforts to walk erect, the weight of the heavy wooden beam, together with the shock produced by copious blood loss, is too much. He stumbles and falls. The rough wood of the beam gouges into the lacerated skin and muscles of the shoulders. He tries to rise, but human muscles have been pushed beyond their endurance. The centurian, anxious to get on with the crucifixion, selects a stalwart North African onlooker, Simon of Cyrene, to carry the cross. Jesus follows, still bleeding and sweating the cold, clammy sweat of shock. The 650 yard journey from the fortress Antonia to Golgotha is finally completed. The prisoner is again stripped of His clothes—except for a loin cloth which is allowed the Jews.

The crucifixion begins. Jesus is offered wine mixed with Myrrh, a mild analgesic mixture. He refuses to drink. Simon is ordered to

place the patibulum on the ground and Jesus is quickly thrown backward with His shoulders against the wood. The legionnaire feels for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drives a heavy, square, wrought-iron nail (FIGURE 3) through the wrist and deep into the wood. Quickly, he moves to the other side and repeats the action, being careful not to pull the arms too tightly, but to allow some flexion and movement. The patibulum is then lifted in place at the top of the stipes and the titulus reading "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" is nailed in place.

The left foot is pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees moderately flexed. The Victim is now crucified. As He slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists, excruciating, fiery pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain—the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As He pushes Himself upward to avoid this stretching torment, He places His full weight on the nail through His feet. Again there is the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the metatarsal bones of the feet.

At this point, another phenomenon occurs. As the arms fatigue, great waves of cramps sweep over the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps comes the inability to push Himself upward. Hanging by His arms, the pectoral muscles are paralyzed and the intercostal muscles are unable to act. Air can be drawn into the lungs, but cannot be exhaled. Jesus fights to raise Himself in order to get even one short breath. Finally, carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically, He is able to push Himself upward to exhale and bring in the life-giving oxygen. It was undoubtedly during these periods that He uttered the seven short sentences which are recorded:

The first, looking down at the Roman soldiers throwing dice for His seamless garment, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

The second, to the penitent thief, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

The third, looking down at the terrified, grief-stricken, adolescent John, (the beloved Apostle).



Figure 3

The Crucifixion of Jesus (5 of 5)

Original Articles

he said, "Behold thy mother," and looking to Mary, his mother, "Woman, behold thy son."

The fourth cry is from the beginning of the 22nd Psalm, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Hours of this limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, searing pain as tissue is torn from His lacerated back as He moves up and down against the rough timber: Then another agony begins. A deep crushing pain deep in the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart.

Let us remember again the 22nd Psalm (the 14th verse), "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels."

It is now almost over—the loss of tissue fluids has reached a critical level—the compressed heart is struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissues—the tortured lungs are making a frantic effort to gasp in small gulfs of air. The markedly dehydrated tissues send their flood of stimuli to the brain.

Jesus gasps His fifth cry, "I thirst."

Let us remember another verse from the prophetic 22nd Psalm: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou has brought me into the dust of death."

A sponge soaked in Posca, the cheap, sour wine which is the staple drink of the Roman legionnaires, is lifted to His lips. He apparently doesn't take any of the liquid. The body of Jesus is now in extremis, and He can feel the chill of death creeping through His tissues. This realization brings out His sixth words—possibly little more than a tortured whisper.

"It is finished."

His mission of atonement has been completed.

Finally He can allow his body to die.

With one last surge of strength, He once again presses His torn feet against the nail, straightens His legs, takes a deeper breath, and utters His seventh and last cry, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit."

The rest you know. In order that the Sabbath not be profaned, the Jews asked that the condemned men be dispatched and removed from the crosses. The common method of ending a crucifixion was by crurifracture, the breaking of the bones of the legs. This prevented the victim from pushing himself upward; the tension could not be relieved from the muscles of the chest, and rapid suffocation occurred. The legs of the two thieves were broken, but when they came to Jesus they saw that this was unnecessary.

Apparently to make doubly sure of death, the legionnaire drove his lance through the fifth interspace between the ribs, upward through the pericardium and into the heart. The 34th verse of the 19th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John: "And immediately there came out blood and water." Thus there was an escape of watery fluid from the sac surrounding the heart and blood from the interior of the heart. We, therefore, have rather conclusive post-mortem evidence that Our Lord died, not the usual crucifixion death by suffocation, but of heart failure due to shock and constriction of the heart by fluid in the pericardium.

Thus we have seen a glimpse of the epitomy of evil which man can exhibit toward man — and toward God. This is not a pretty sight and is apt to leave us despondent and depressed. How grateful we can be that we have a sequel: A glimpse of the infinite mercy of God toward man — the miracle of the atonement and the expectation of Easter morning!

Proofs for Christ's Resurrection

Grace Baptist (Pinetree Town & Country Club) 20 April 1996
 Crossroads International Church Singapore 16 April 2017
 NIV; PPT uploaded at the Topical Preaching link at BibleStudyDownloads.org

Dr. Rick Griffith
 Single Message
 25 Minutes

Title

Who Moved the Stone?

Topical Message

Matt 24
 Reading

Topic: Resurrection
Subject: Proofs for the resurrection of Christ
Complement: lead us to believe this is a historical fact.
Purpose: The listeners will believe intellectually that the resurrection took place.
Note: This message was originally preceded by Dr. Wee's proofs that Christ indeed did die and followed by Dr. Poulson's evangelistic closing (implications of the event).
Meditation: 1 Corinthians 15:58
Reading: Matthew 24
Song: Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Introduction

Ossuary

1. **Attention:** In February 2007 members of the media gathered at a news conference in New York to photograph two ossuaries (chests with human skeletal remains) said to have been found in a 2000-year-old tomb in Talpiot Jerusalem in 1980 that may have held the bones of Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Filmmaker James Cameron unveiled the artifacts in New York to promote a documentary film that claims scientists may have found the lost tomb of Jesus Christ and that—to support Dan Brown's claim in *The Da Vinci Code*—Jesus and Mary Magdalene may have had a son named Judah. Time and again BBC and other news agencies report that archaeologists in Jerusalem have discovered the bones of Jesus of Nazareth. Is this true?

Da Vinci
 Code

Difference it
 makes

2. **Interest:** This is no idle question, for since the first days of Christianity believers have claimed a resurrection for Jesus Christ. In fact, the resurrection of Jesus Christ and Christianity stand or fall together.

What's the
 Diff Black

- a) Why? Christians claim to have a living relationship with the person of Christ. No one can have a relationship with a dead man.

World
 Religions

- b) No other religion makes a claim of an empty tomb for its founder. If the claim of a resurrection is false then over one billion people have believed a lie (which is certainly possible, but would be sad indeed!).

What's the
 Diff 1 Cor

- c) Without a resurrection, Christianity would be the most vicious lie of history—for even today 245 people per day all give their lives for Christ.

833 martyrs
 daily

- d) A dead Jesus invalidates all that he taught. He claimed to be “the resurrection and the life.”

Resurrect &
 Life

- e) In other words, the resurrection is an issue of utmost importance!

Facts

3. **Background:** So, let's evaluate what we know are the facts.

Thinking
 people

- a) You are all thinking people, skilled in looking at facts in science, law, and business. I trust that you can look at evidence and weigh it for what it is like many have in the generations preceding you. I was trained this way in business school myself, being forced to make decisions based on balance sheets, cost analyses, and the like.

- b) The facts show at least six precautions to assure that Christ would not rise again:

1: Dead
(2 slides)

(1) Fact 1: Christ was dead. If anyone knew how to kill, it was the Romans. One remnant of a crucified man shows the ankle wholly pierced with a massive nail.

2: Tomb
(2 slides)

(2) Fact 2: He was buried in a solid rock tomb according to the practice of the time—a cave carved out of a rock wall with no entry except a 1.5-meter door.

3: Wrapped
(2 slides)

(3) Fact 3: The body was wrapped with a 45 kg (100-pound) encasement of grave clothes. These linen strips and gummy spices hardened into a cocoon case much like a mummy. The friends of Jesus would have had a hard time carrying such a heavy load.

4: Stone
(2 slides)

(4) Fact 4: Engineers have calculated that a stone of nearly 2 tons would have been required to cover the 1.5-meter opening. The Bible says that after two days of burial this was rolled uphill away from the entire tomb area!

5: Guard
(4 slides)

(5) Fact 5: A Roman guard was placed at the tomb to protect the body from being stolen. Some imagine a few men in miniskirts “guarding the tomb.” Hardly! A Roman guard was a 4 to 16-man force capable of withstanding an advancing army of enemy troops. These guys were tough dudes!

6: Seal
(2 slides)

(6) Fact 6: The seal. After the guard inspected the body and rolled the stone into place, they stretched a cord across it, fastening it with sealing clay at either end. On the clay in the middle was stamped the seal of the governor. Breaking his signet would incur the wrath of Roman law.

4. But something happened two days later that changed the course of history.

2017

a) Today’s date testifies to it, for the date at the top—2017, “in the year of our Lord”—bears witness to the events of that day.

Sunday

b) In fact, you even have each Sunday off work due to belief in the resurrection, which eventually made Sunday a rest day!

Cross

5. So, what happened with the body of Jesus?

Wrong
Tomb

a) Some have claimed that what happened was not a resurrection, but the so-called eyewitnesses went to the wrong tomb. Sounds plausible, especially for people mourning over the death of a loved one. I’m not sure how that will make angels appear at that wrong tomb, though!

Angels &
Mary

Pharisee

b) But the Jewish authorities didn’t have misty eyes! When it was proclaimed that Jesus arose, all these unbelieving authorities had to do was to bring people to the right tomb and display the body of Jesus!

Who
Moved?

6. No, somebody moved stone. You’re thinking, educated people. Let’s think through this together: *Who* moved the massive stone over Christ’s tomb (subject)?

MP I.

Robbers didn’t move the stone.

[Random thieves certainly did not fake a resurrection.]

Why am I so convinced that grave robbers didn’t take the body?

One author notes, “Aside from there being zero explicit historical evidence to support such a notion, there is strong evidence from history to show that this would not have possibly happened, and that comes from an artifact known as the Nazareth Inscription. It likely dates to either the reign of Julius Caesar, or perhaps Augustus — at about 30 BC – [14] AD. This is what it says:”

Caesar
(3 slides)

A. The well-known edict of Caesar proclaimed the death penalty for those who disturbed graves.

Possible?

Romans?

B. Besides, there was no incentive or wealth buried with Jesus—plus they would have to risk their lives against the Roman contingent. And John says that the headpiece on Jesus was folded by itself. Why would robbers leave any of the grave clothes?

Neat
clothes?

MP II. Disciples didn't move the stone.

[The followers of Jesus certainly did not fake a resurrection.]

Despond

- A. Why not? They were least expecting a resurrection! Nearly every disciple fled when Jesus was crucified and then locked themselves up like scared chickens in a hen house.
- B. But within a few days they changed from fearful men to fearless men boldly proclaiming the resurrection—and ten of the eleven disciples died a martyr's death for their faith. Would you give your life for a lie? That's not courage but insanity!

Hands

- C. Jesus' followers were mostly fishermen by trade. Can we really believe that such men could fight through a Roman guard and move a 2-ton stone? You've heard of the Jewish 6-day war? This would have been the Jewish 6-second war!

Guards
floored

- D. Even still, the rumor that the leaders spread was that the Roman soldiers saw the disciples steal the body while they were asleep. Tell me, friends, have you ever seen *anybody steal anything* when you were asleep?
- E. Do you know the penalty for Roman soldiers who fell asleep on duty? Especially at night? Automatic execution by having his clothes set on fire! These soldiers would be banging each other on the head to keep awake! Not one of these guards would have been asleep—let alone the whole bunch of them!

(So, Jesus' disciples didn't move the stone. What about the unbelieving authorities? No, the...)

Jews III. Jews didn't move the stone.

[The religious authorities in Jerusalem certainly didn't want to fake a resurrection.]

Close-Up

- A. They were the ones to try to prevent the stone from being moved!

Jews
Standing

- B. The Jewish leaders were the ones who requested the Roman guard.

Grave
Clothes

- C. If the Jews took the body not anticipating that others would see this as a resurrection, all they had to do was to publicly show the body! They felt that a fake resurrection would lead to even more followers of Jesus. No one out of envy aids his opponent!

(So, neither the disciples nor Jewish authorities moved that stone. What about the Romans? No...)

MP IV. Romans didn't move the stone.

[Guards funded by the occupying power had no interest in suicide by not doing their job.]

Pilate

- A. The Roman soldiers were the ones commanded by Pilate to guard the tomb!
- B. Do you know the penalty for a Roman soldier who let the seal get broken? Execution again! You can be sure they guarded it for fear of death itself.
- C. As hard as they tried to protect it, though, the Bible says that an earthquake occurred, the seal was broken and then the guards became the scared chickens. In fact, they were the first witnesses to the resurrection! They told the religious leaders about it and even made some money off by taking a bribe. The Jewish authorities also protected their lives.

Risen
(4 slides)

- D. The 2016 movie "Risen" accurately depicts the plight of the Romans who needed to find the body to prevent the resurrection story from being spread.

(No grave robber, disciple, Jewish leader, or Roman soldier would have stolen the body. And if an unbeliever ever found a body, the enemies of Christianity would have paraded it through Jerusalem to kill this new faith in the womb. And who would have become a believer in Jesus by seeing a dead body—or even die for a hoax? No, it stands to reason that...)

MP

V. Jesus Christ moved the stone!

[Our Lord is the only reasonable option for the empty tomb—so he rose from the dead!]

Large Stone

- A. And why not? Several times before his death he predicted that he would die and rise again.
- B. But you say, “Maybe he did it, but he didn’t actually die.” Suppose Jesus wasn’t really dead.
1. No, he was up all night in six trials that included being beaten beyond recognition...
 2. Was so weak he couldn’t even carry his own cross...
 3. Was crucified with seven-inch nails driven through his hands and feet...
 4. Received a spear thrust into his heart...
 5. Was put into a 100-pound cocoon of grave cloths...
 6. Laid in a dark, cold, wet tomb with a nearly 2-ton doorway...
- C. But, instead of all of these things killing him, it healed him?
1. He split out of the clothes...
 2. He pushed the stone uphill away from the tomb...
 3. He conquered the entire group of guards...
 4. He appeared to his disciples and never even got any pity from them?
- D. Sorry, I don’t have enough faith to believe that! That’s even more miraculous than a resurrection!

Conclusion

MI
Garden Tomb
Morison Book
He is Not Here!
Gospel Circle
Garden Tomb
Jesus
Resurrect Life!
Jesus & Bread

1. Since no person would have or could have moved the stone, a supernatural resurrection must have occurred (Main Idea)! We have exhausted all reasonable options. Jesus rose!
2. I appeal to you as intelligent friends. Christianity is based on the most incredible event of history—the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
3. In the 1920s, the skeptic Frank Morison set out on a quest to disprove the resurrection. His research ended in proving what he tried to destroy, so instead he wrote the classic book, *Who Moved the Stone?*
4. Why is this important? It relates to the message we preach called the gospel, or Good News. This news includes the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.
5. It is based in history as you can visit the tomb today to see it for yourself.
6. It’s not an issue as much as it is a Person—the Person of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.
7. Jesus came alive and never died since. That means that he is as alive today as you or me. It also means that as God himself he can change your life as a living Saviour.
8. As he reached out his hand to give his followers bread, so he is reaching out to give you himself as the True Bread from heaven right now. Will you accept him?

Because He Lives

Implications of Christ's Resurrection

Small Group Question: What difference does Christ's resurrection make in your life? What implications of Christ being alive today can be gleaned from the passages below?

I. Christ's resurrection affects you in many ways!

A. Christ's resurrection gives you a new day of worship.

1. John 20:1, 19, 26
2. Acts 20:7
3. Rev. 1:10

B. Christ's resurrection proves that Jesus taught truth.

1. Acts 2:32, 36
2. John 14:6

C. Christ's resurrection gives you forgiveness.

1. Rom. 4:25
2. 1 Cor. 15:17-19
3. 1 Pet. 1:3

D. Christ's resurrection gives you victory over sin in your life.

1. Rom. 6:10-11
2. Rom. 6:14

E. Christ's resurrection gives you assurance of a new body in the future.

1. 1 Cor. 15:51
2. 1 John 3:2
3. Luke 24:31, 36
4. 1 Cor. 15:20

II. How then should you live?

- A. Believe that Christ is alive (1 Cor. 15:58a).
- B. Serve Him fully (1 Cor. 15:58b).
- C. Work for rewards (1 Cor. 15:58c).

III. Conclusion

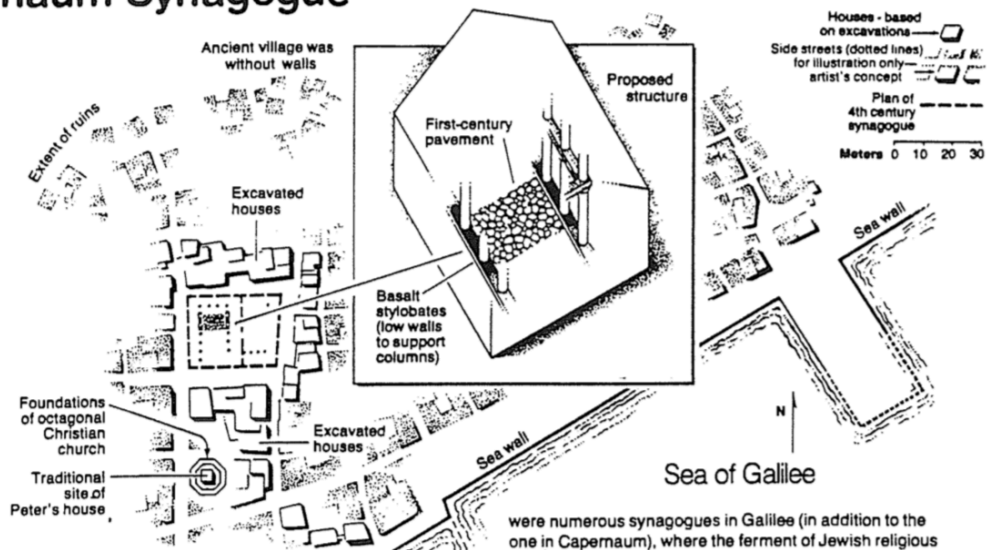
1. Christ's resurrection gives you lots of benefits, so serve Him and He will reward you! (Main Idea)
2. Which of the five results or implications of the resurrection means the most to you?
3. How will you respond? What specifically can you do to show that Christ being alive today is something you genuinely believe?

Capernaum Synagogue & Resurrection Appearances

Bible Visual Resource Book, 201

Luke

Capernaum Synagogue



Capernaum was more than a seaside fishing village in the days of Jesus. It was the place that Christ chose to be the center of his ministry to the entire region of Galilee, and it possessed ideal characteristics as a point of dissemination for the gospel.

There were good reasons for this. The town itself was named *Kephar Nahum*, "village of (perhaps the prophet), Nahum" and was the centerpiece of a densely populated region having a bicultural flavor. On the one hand, there

were numerous synagogues in Galilee (in addition to the one in Capernaum), where the ferment of Jewish religious life was profound. On the other hand, there was Hellenism, a pervasive culture already centuries old and potent in its paganism—a lifestyle that influenced manners, dress, architecture and political institutions as well.

Recent archaeological work at Capernaum has revealed a section of the pavement of a first-century synagogue below the still-existing ruins of the fourth-century one on the site. A private house later made into a church and a place of pilgrimage has yielded some evidence that may link it to the site of Simon Peter's house (Lk 4:38).

Resurrection Appearances

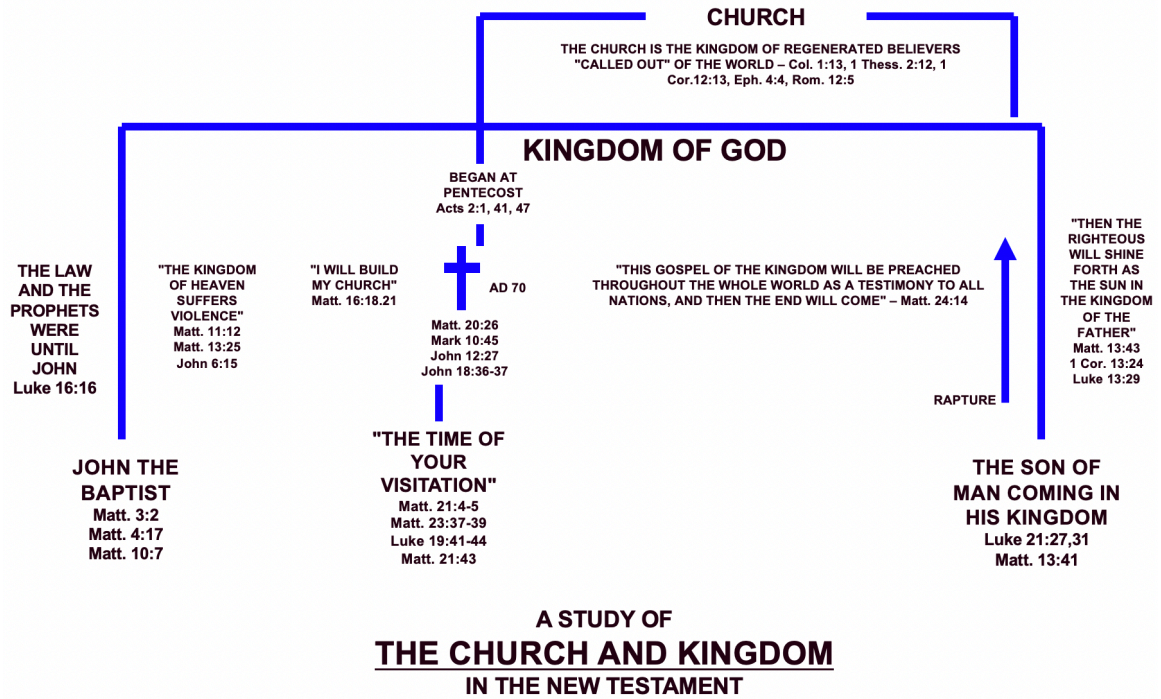
I Corinthians

EVENT	DATE	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John	Acts
At the empty tomb outside Jerusalem	Early Sunday morning	28:1-10	16:1-8	24:1-12	20:1-9	
To Mary Magdalene at the tomb	Early Sunday morning		16:9-11		20:11-18	
To two travelers on the road to Emmaus	Sunday at midday			24:13-32		
To Peter in Jerusalem	During the day on Sunday			24:34		15:5
To the ten disciples in the upper room	Sunday evening		16:14	24:36-43	20:19-25	
To the eleven disciples in the upper room	One week later				20:26-31	15:5
To seven disciples fishing on the Sea of Galilee	One day at daybreak				21:1-23	
To the eleven disciples on the mountain in Galilee	Some time later	28:16-20	16:15-18			
To more than 500	Some time later					15:6
To James	Some time later					15:7
At the Ascension on the Mt. of Olives	Forty days after the resurrection			24:44-49		1:3-8

The Church and Kingdom (Luke 19:41-44)

Adapted from Raymond Ludwigson, *A Survey of Bible Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 83

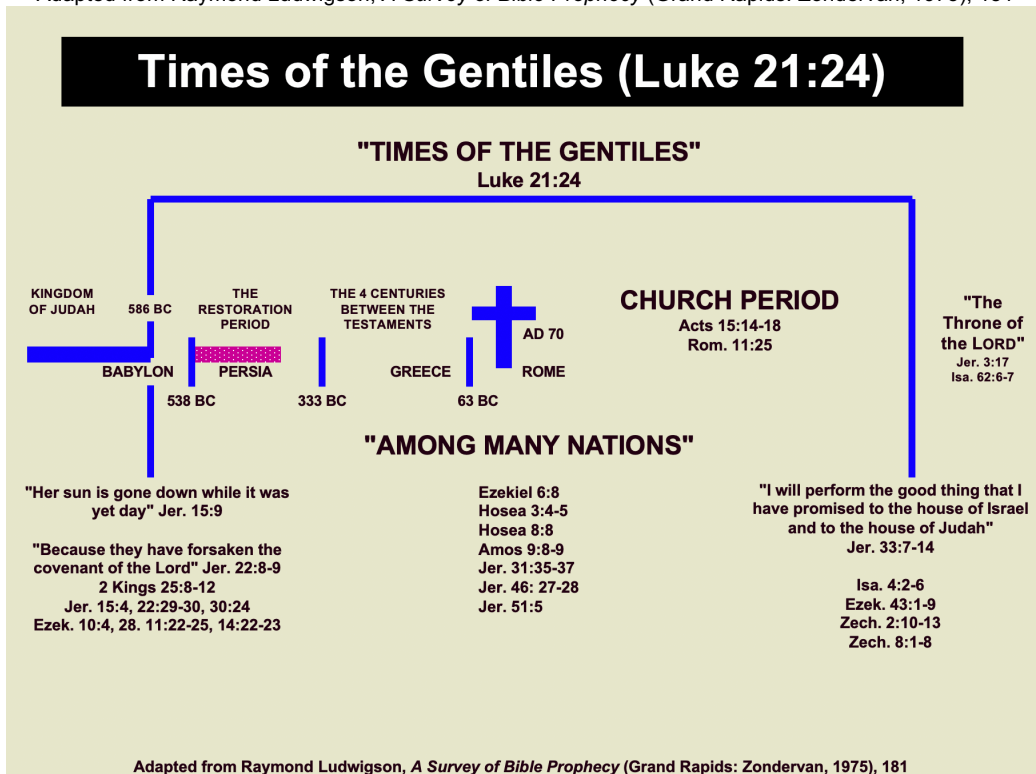
The Church and Kingdom (Luke 19:41-44)



Adapted from Raymond Ludwigson, *A Survey of Bible Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 83

The Times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24)

Adapted from Raymond Ludwigson, *A Survey of Bible Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 181



Adapted from Raymond Ludwigson, *A Survey of Bible Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 181

The unforgivable sin

"I'M AFRAID I have lost my salvation! Can you help me understand what 'Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit' is? Why did Jesus say it was 'unforgivable'?"

I AM truly sorry you are troubled by such doubts. Romans 10:13 tells us that "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Are there any limitations or restrictions? NO! In fact the verse before that says, "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame." The promise is to every living person on this planet.

You might say, "How do I know I've truly believed in Him? How do I know that I'm not just *pretending*?" Look at Rom 10:9. If you confess with your mouth and you believe the truth that "God raised Jesus from the dead", then you have believed. It's that simple.

Again you might say, "How do I know I have believed *enough*?" Look again at v13. It doesn't say, "will save themselves", or, "will be counted good enough to be saved", does it? Not at all. It says they will *BE* saved. The passive voice in the original language means, not that we save ourselves, but SOMEONE ELSE is doing the saving. And that someone is God.

In Rom 3:10 – 18 we have a description of the kind of people God saves. Read it carefully. God saves the worst kind of people – wretched, wicked sinners!

Next look at Rom 3:23,24: "...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." You didn't earn your salvation. Your 'believing enough' does not merit salvation. You don't deserve salvation. Salvation is yours on one basis alone: the free gift from God.

What then is this "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit"? This statement of Jesus appears in Matthew 12:31, Mark 3:29 and Luke 12:10. The context in all three places is very similar, the Pharisees refused to accept the truth about Jesus: He is God's heavenly messenger. Jesus is, in fact, the divine Messiah.

The passage, actually, reflects the grace of God. How so? Jesus is saying that while He was on earth, those who blasphemed against Him by saying that He was not from God, that He was in league or working with the Devil, would be forgiven.

If you read the story of the Walk to Emmaus (Lk 24:13ff) you will see even Jesus' disciples could not

see all the truth. Jesus' own half-brother, James (who would eventually become a pillar in the church – see Acts 15) did not believe the earthly Jesus. So what Jesus speaks about here is the patience of God while Jesus was on earth. But then He speaks very sternly, "whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit" will not be forgiven. And this blasphemy is, after Jesus' ascension and the descending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, to resist the Holy Spirit's call to believe in Jesus. Today, God's Spirit is in the world, persuading men and women to believe that Jesus is Lord. For those who sin against the Spirit, by refusing to believe this truth and confess it, they will not find forgiveness in the blood of Christ, but rather condemnation on Judgement Day.

What does this mean to you? If you have called upon the name of the Lord, this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit HAS ABSOLUTELY NO APPLICABILITY TO YOUR LIFE WHATSOEVER! If God saved you, you belong to him, and you are in his hand. NO ONE – not even yourself – can *snatch you out of Jesus' hand* (see Jn 10:27-30). Every sin you'll ever commit is already covered by the blood of the Lamb. Yes, you may become angry. You might even shake your fist at God... but only for a moment. The Holy Spirit within will prick your conscience, lead you into repentance and put you back into right relationship with your Master. You are His sheep (Jn 10). He is your Good Shepherd. He may have to rebuke and chasten you, but He will never cast you to the wolves. He will never disown you. And the more you grow, the more you'll love Him – and the less you'll want to sin and stray from Him. This is the sign that the Holy Spirit is indeed in your life: growth, however small, but growth.

The mere fact that your soul is tortured to know if you are saved, is an indication that the Holy Spirit is at work in you. The wicked care nothing for God (remember Rom 3:10-18!). The concern for your salvation does not arise from YOUR OWN wicked soul, it is a sign that God is graciously at work in you in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore: SING AND REJOICE!!! *As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame. For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

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Satan at the Cross

by David Cook

The death of Christ as viewed by Satan —
created for use at the end of a Good Friday service

Setting: *A cross stands in the middle of the stage, with black material draped over it. Two candelabras, which hold seven candles each, stand on either side of the cross. This is the only light in the sanctuary, except for a single candle on a low table five feet in front of the cross. Satan is dressed in black, and throughout the monologue, he blows out the 14 candles one-by-one, so by the end, the sanctuary is in darkness except for one remaining candle, which is on the low table. Eventually, this one too will be blown out. Each place in the dialogue where each candle is to be blown out is indicated by a bolded number in parentheses.*

Satan walks out and looks at the cross.

So, Jesus, how does it feel to have your life slowly ebbing out of your body? How does it feel to have bugs getting stuck in your wounds? **(1)** How does it feel to hear the mockery? It's a pity, isn't it? It could have been different, you know. **(2)** Why are you doing this? I know your power — you could come down from there if you wish. So why don't you? Don't tell me you're dying for *them!* (*Pointing to the crowd, which is in the direction of the congregation.*) **(3)** I mean, look at them —selfish, greedy, hating — what have they done to deserve your attention? *Nothing! Absolutely nothing!!!* Listen to their jeers — they're glad you're dying, but they're not grateful. **(4)** Why don't you curse them? Yell back in anger! Show them you really are a man! **(5)** Tell you what — I'll make your death painless if you only curse them! Hmmm? What do you say? (*pause*) *What!?!?! "Father forgive them??"* Come off it Jesus! Even in death you still think of others! **(6)**

*Satan now stretches his arms and back and reaches back to scratch it, only to pause for a moment to give a glance at the cross. He bursts out laughing, as it is an attempt to egg Jesus on, by showing that Jesus isn't able to stretch or scratch on the cross. **(7)***

Oh yes, and I've heard of your plan that by your death, sinners will be reconciled to God. Do you really think it will work? **(8)** Sure, people will mourn your death, and they'll bring you flowers and they'll make promises that they will always keep your words, but then as the years go by, they will forget, and the promises will be broken. **(9)** It's happened to people in the past, and will happen in the future... so what makes you think that your death will be any different, hmmm? **(10)** This is a stubborn people (*pointing to the crowd again*) — they need to be shown power, and whipped into submission. **(11)** Do you think that if they have a choice, they would actually choose the right one? (*pause*) **(12)** Where are your followers? (*snicker*) They're gone. Oh yes, I see those few women crying their heads off, but do you think they'll amount to anything? **(13)** Face it, Jesus, your mission here has ended in failure, and I'm the Victor! **(14)**

Laughter. Satan then picks up the one remaining candle on the low table and holds it in his hands and pauses, as if he is listening to something.

What's that? "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It's finished! He's dead! (*With this, the last candle is blown out, putting the congregation in complete darkness. Satan then laughs, loud and triumphantly.*)