

HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

Luke 13¹ – 14²⁴

Leader's Guide

Hearing the Word Luke 13:1 – 14:24 Leader's Guide

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Web Edition

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Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Phil and June Malloch, whose tireless editing, reviewing and pulling together of materials has enabled the Hearing the Word resource to be shared with the wider church.

Nigel Barge, October, 2016

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Resources

The *New Bible Dictionary* 3rd edition, published by Inter Varsity Press.

The *New Bible Commentary* 21st century edition.

A one-volume commentary on every book of the Bible, published by IVP

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Hearing the Word: A Tool for Bible reading



LOOK – What does it *say*?

- 1) The Text
 - a) What questions does it raise -
Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?
 - b) What surprises you?
- 2) The Context?
 - a) the surrounding text
 - b) the Book of the Bible
 - c) the whole Bible
 - d) the place in the Bible Story



LEARN – What does it *mean*?

- 1) What type of writing is it?
- 2) Answer the questions
- 3) Summarise the passage



LISTEN – What is the *message*?

- 1) Which is the main point?
- 2) Which is the key verse?



LIVE – How should we *respond*?

- 1) What does it show about God, (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) :
 - a) His nature and character?
 - b) His grace*
 - c) Jesus / his salvation**
- 2) What should I do?

* God's undeserved generosity is evident throughout the Bible, and it is perfectly expressed in Jesus.

**** The Bible, from ‘the Fall’ onwards, describes God’s plan of salvation through his Son. Thus, *all* the Scriptures speak in some way of Jesus (Luke 24:27).**

Reading Narrative

In seeking to hear the Word of God throughout the Bible, we need to take into account the *type of literature* in which each part is written. Luke is mainly *narrative* (story), the most common type, seasoned with *teaching* and *parable*. To approach narrative correctly we need to keep these principles in mind.

1 In General: It is *God’s* story

The whole Bible recounts the story of God’s dealings with humankind. After creation and the fall in Genesis, the rest describes how God works out his unfolding plan of salvation for humanity in Jesus. The OT prepares for the arrival, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The NT recounts these and looks forwards to his return at the end of time. It is *all* about Jesus. Therefore:

a) Every part relates to Him (Luke 24:27; John 5:39).

So as we read, we should be asking – ‘what does this show about Jesus; what is He doing?’

b) Everything is relevant.

In a film every scene plays some part in the overall story. Often, we are shown things in the early stages that make no sense until later. The Bible is the same. So, as we read Bible narrative – knowing how it ends – we should be asking ‘what relevance has *this* part of the story to the *main* story?’

2 In particular: ‘Follow the camera angle’

A film director focuses the viewer’s attention on particular shots to tell ‘his story’. In the same way each narrator in the Bible is selective about what to tell us. They leave out much general detail, only giving us what is relevant to what they are trying to convey.

As we read, we should therefore be asking the question, ‘Why is he telling me this and in this particular way?’

3 Warts and all

Human beings often get things wrong. The Bible narrative faithfully records errors, even by people who are elsewhere commended. For instance, Moses murdered a man, King David committed adultery, and Peter, who was praised for realising Jesus was the Christ, was minutes later roundly scolded when he tried to stop Jesus being the Christ through suffering! (Exodus 2:12; 2 Samuel 11; Matthew 16:16-23)

So we can't treat every thought or action in a narrative as something to copy, just because 'it's in the Bible'. We must ask the Holy Spirit to use the rest of Scripture to discern good examples to follow, and bad ones to avoid.

Background to Luke's Gospel

The Author

Luke was a doctor and friend of the apostle Paul, who calls him 'the beloved physician' and 'fellow worker' (Colossians 4:14; Philemon 1:24). He began to travel with Paul at Troas (Acts 16:10). He was close to Paul near the end of his life (2 Timothy 4:11).

He may have come from Antioch in Syria, or Troas, or Philippi in Macedonia. He was a Gentile (i.e. not a Jew). Indeed he is the only non-Jewish writer in the New Testament.

He had carried out careful research (see Luke 1:3, 2:51). He also wrote the story of the early church in the 5th book of the New Testament, whose full title is: 'The Acts of the Apostles'. It takes us up to Paul's imprisonment in Rome but not his trial, suggesting Luke finished writing it before that event

The Date of writing

Luke wrote his gospel before writing Acts (*see* Acts 1:1) probably before 63AD

The structure

A	The introduction	(1: 1 - 4)
B	The birth of Jesus	(1:5 - 2:52)
C	The start of Jesus' ministry	(3:1 - 4:13)
D	Jesus in Galilee	(4:14 - 9:50)
E	From Galilee to Jerusalem	(9:51 - 19:44)
F	Jesus in Jerusalem	(19:45 - 21:38)
G	The death of Jesus	(22:1 - 23:56)
H	The resurrection of Jesus	(24:1 - 53)

So this volume of *Hearing the Word* falls in Section E

Its purpose

Matthew and Mark probably wrote their gospels before Luke. Unlike them Luke had not himself witnessed Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection, but he'd had personal contact with many eyewitnesses who had. He addresses both his Gospel and Acts to someone called Theophilus. This may have been a real individual: could he have been an official in Roman government?... Someone who wanted details of Christianity before Paul's trial in Rome?... Someone who paid Luke's expenses while writing? Actually, the name means, 'friend of God', so it might

refer to anyone, in any time or place, who *wanted to know the Gospel and be a friend of God*.

The Themes

Five themes keep re-occurring in Luke's Gospel:

1 Salvation

a) a historical event

Jesus Christ's coming to earth as a man is the centre point of history. Luke points out the exact time and situation of Jesus' birth. (Luke 2). Jesus sets his face towards Jerusalem (9:51) where he completes his work, commits his Spirit to the Father, and dies (23:46). On the third day he rises from death. Forty days later, having promised to return, he ascends to heaven (Acts 1:9-11). Meantime, the Good News of this salvation is offered to all by the power of the Spirit (Acts 2:38,39).

b) for all mankind

From the announcement by the angels of 'good news ... for all people' (2:10) to the genealogy of Jesus stretching back to Adam (3:38), it is clear the non-Jews are included too. This does not deny the importance of Israel. Luke begins and ends his Gospel with people in Jerusalem and shows it to be the ultimate destination of Jesus' earthly ministry (1:8; 2:22, 36; 9:51-53; 13:22; 17:11; 18:31; 19:28).

2 The 'outsiders'

Luke shows that people seen as 'weak' are equally welcome in the Kingdom of God, by recording Jesus' interaction with them. This includes:

a) Women

Women are central to the story. At the beginning, the angelic announcement of His birth was to Mary (1:26-38) and at end, the truth of His resurrection was given first to the women at the tomb (24:1-11). He ministered to women in various settings (7:11; 7:37; 13:11; 21:1-4) and it was women who helped finance Him and His apostles (8:2-3).

b) Children

The accounts of Jesus' birth show the importance and value of a child from the womb (1:41!). At various times he intervenes to heal the child of a distraught parent (7:12; 8:42; 9:38)

c) The poor

Jesus himself was from Nazareth (4:16) – a poor, insignificant town (John 1:46). His birth was to an unmarried girl and witnessed by the 'outcasts' of society, the shepherds (2:8-20). The offering at His birth was that of the poor (2:24; Leviticus

12:8) and the message he preached was for the poor (4:18; 7:22). He died with common criminals (23:32,41).

d) Gentiles

Luke, himself a Gentile, is writing to another Gentile, Theophilus (1:3). He records the faith of a Gentile Roman Centurion: of him, Jesus says he had 'not found such great faith in Israel' (7:9). Possibly out of deference to his non-Jewish readership, Luke seldom quotes the Old Testament.

3 The Holy Spirit

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is explicit throughout the Gospel, in:

a) the birth of John the Baptist (1:15,41,57) **b)** the conception of Jesus (1:35) **c)** Simeon's prophecy about Jesus (2:25-27) **d)** John's promise that Jesus would 'baptise with the Holy Spirit' (3:16) **e)** the baptism of Jesus (3:22) **f)** the temptations of Jesus (4:1) **g)** the power of Jesus' ministry (4:18) **h)** the joy of the Spirit (10:21) **i)** the promise of the Spirit for His followers (11:13; 12:10-12; 24:49), fulfilled at Pentecost, as Luke records in Acts 2.

4 The humanity of Jesus

There is no clearer way of demonstrating Jesus' humanity than noting his recourse to prayer. Through this he shows:

- a) his own dependence on the Father through prayer (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28, 29; 10:21; 11:1; 22:39-46; 23:34, 46).
- b) his identification with his disciples, as He similarly instructs them in prayer through
 - i) parables - the friend at midnight (11:5-13) the unjust judge (18:1-8); the Pharisee and the tax collector (18:10-14)
 - ii) teaching on prayer (6:28; 11:2; 22:40, 46)

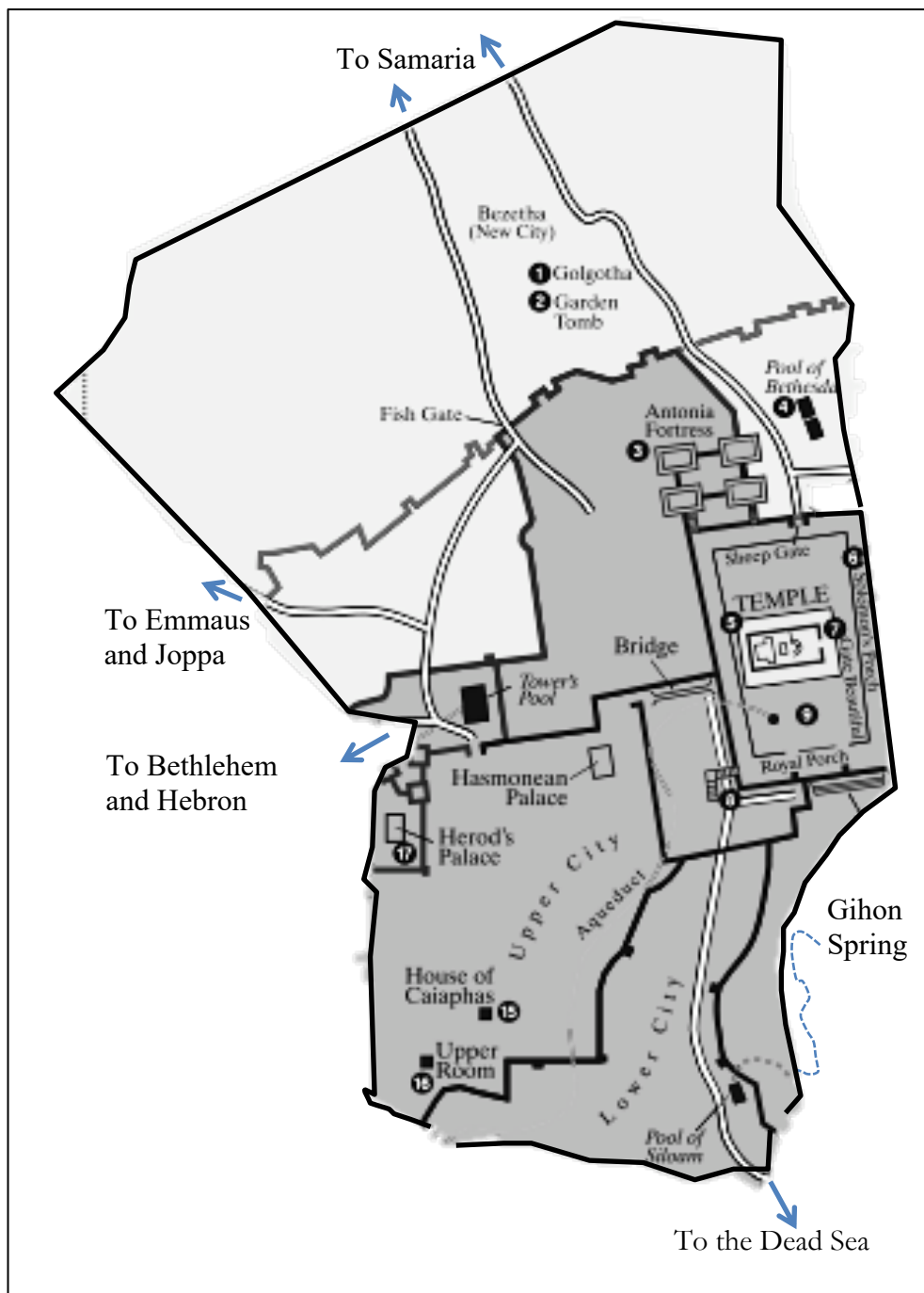
5 The deity of Jesus

Luke presents Jesus as God in an *oblique* way. This fact was not acknowledged at that time. This is the key theme of the first 5 chapters:

1:17 John prepares for the Lord	4:41 the Son of God
1:32 called Son of the Most High	5:8 the Holy presence
1:43 Mary mother of 'my Lord'	5:13 able to cleanse an individual
2:11 Saviour who is Christ the Lord	5:20 a forgiver of sin
2:49 in 'His Father's house'	5:32 (righteous one) calling sinners to repentance
	5:34 the bridegroom

3:22 God says ‘you are my Son’;

4:34 The Holy one of God ^



For Luke 13:1-9, page 7

The darker area shows what was thought to be the extent of Jerusalem in Jesus' time (c33AD). The heavy black lines represent the walls at various times.

The lighter part to the north was added later.

The Pool of Siloam was in the south, supplied by an underground tunnel dug in Hezekiah's time (c705 BC). It ran from Gihon Spring, outside the city wall. Route shown by the dotted line.

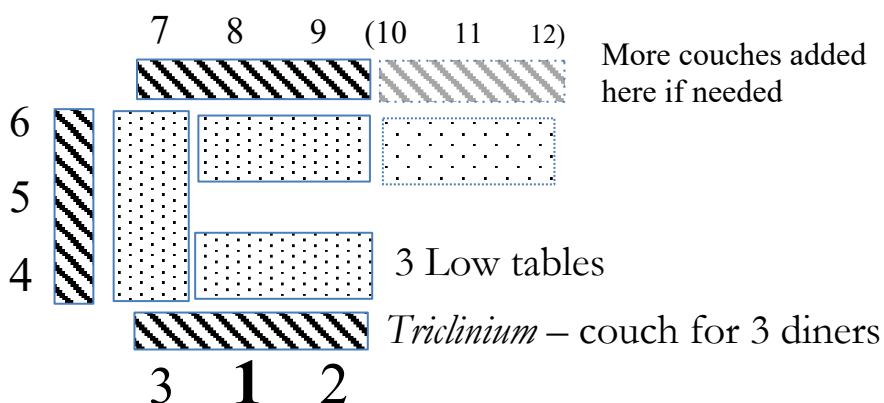
The pool was close to the city wall, whose corners had towers. It is possible Jesus was referring to one of these towers.

For Luke 14:1-14 p 22

Before chairs and tables as used today, food was served from the space between 3 low tables, or even 3 mats, arranged in a U-shape. Dinner guests reclined on left elbow, three to a couch, feet behind them.

The host was in the mid position of one 'leg' of the U; the most honoured guest was to his right; the next most honoured to his left and so on to their left.

For extra guests, more (tables &) couches could be added to the end of the side opposite the host. The person in the lowest position washed the feet of the others.



Study 1

Luke 13:1-9

Repent or Perish

Background information and Word List

In AD 26, the Roman Emperor Tiberias appointed Pontius Pilate to be in full control of the province of Judea. Pilate could now appoint high priests and control the Temple and its funds. Jewish historian Josephus alleges a particular grievance of the Jews against Pilate: when he built an aqueduct to bring spring water into the city, he used money from the Temple to pay for it. Tens of thousands protested. In response, Pilate sent his troops amongst them in disguise; a large number were killed. This is probably the incident referred to in v1. Jesus is on way to Jerusalem (9:51) but probably still in Galilee.

- | | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| 1 | <i>Pilate</i> | Pontius Pilate, Roman Governor/Procurator of Judea |
| | <i>Galileans</i> | From area in North Palestine around the Sea of Galilee |
| | <i>Blood</i> | Passover only festival where people sacrificed own animals |
| 3 | <i>repent</i> | Turn round, have a radical change of heart. Greek is present continuous tense: 'Unless you <i>keep turning</i> away from sin.' |
| 4 | <i>Siloam</i> | The pool was supplied by water from Gihon Spring outside the walls, originally by a surface stream and canal; then reached by a shaft, used by David to capture Jerusalem from the Jebusites, <i>2 Samuel 5:8</i> ; but later linked by an underground tunnel dug in the time of Hezekiah to secure the water supply when attacked by Assyria. <i>2 Kings 20:20</i> ; <i>2 Chronicles 32:1-5</i> . The tower may have been on Ophel ridge above the pool, perhaps part of the nearby city wall. <i>See sketch map opposite</i> . |
| 5 | <i>repent</i> | Same verb as in v3 but Greek here is aorist tense, i.e. a single decisive action in the past with on-going effect. |
| 6 | <i>fig tree</i> | It would normally be mature and fruit-bearing in 3 years. |
| | <i>find any</i> | The discovery of fruit requires close investigation as it is hidden among the leaves. |
| 8 | <i>dig around</i> | Root pruning, with fertiliser, inducing the plant to respond to the 'shock' by producing fruit |

Bible connections

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Pilate</i> | <i>see</i> Matthew 27:2 |
| 2 | <i>Is suffering brought about by sin?</i> | <i>see also</i> John 9:2-3 |
| 5 | <i>repentance</i> | <i>see</i> Luke 3:3 Acts 2:38 |

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 1 *What time had they been present at?*
Why had they told Jesus about the Galileans and Pilate?
- 2 *What was He meaning about being greater sinners?*
- 3 *What were they to repent from?*
How/when would they perish?
- 4 *Why does He phrase it as a question?*
- 6 *Why did He tell them this parable?*
Why was the fig tree in the vineyard?
Who does 'the man' represent?
- 7 *Why after three years*
- 8 *Who is the man who takes care of the vineyard / who appeals?*
Why dig around it / fertilise it?
- 9 *Why the 'stay of execution'?*

What surprises or confuses you?

Why is the owner so 'callous'?

2) The Context

surrounding passage,

- 1 *Present time = talking of judgement (12:48)*
- 5 *I tell you no (12:51)*

individual book,

- 2 *'Sinners' (15:1)*
- 3 *Repent (10:13; 15:7, 16:30; 17:3)*
Fig tree (21:29)
Fruit of repentance (Luke 3:8)
Perish - at hands of Romans (21:21-24) or eternally (John 3:16)
- 9 *cut it down (c.f. 14:28; 19:24,27; 20:16)*

whole bible,

- 3 *All have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God (Romans 3:23)*
Paul wretched man (Romans 7:24) worst of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15)
Unrepentant Jews excluded from salvation (Romans 11:22; Matthew 21:43)
- 6 *Fig tree (Mark 11:12-24)*

- 9 *If anyone's name was not found — lake of fire (Rev 20:15)*
 God's patience leads to repentance (Rom 2:4)

Bible story

God and humanity have been separated by sin.

God's requirements of the Law have been given but not met.

God's solution is about to happen as He sends His Son, Jesus.

LEARN

- 1) What type of literature is this?

Parable

- 2) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

1 *It was in the context of Jesus about being ready for the day of Judgement. (12:33-59)*

They told Jesus about the Galileans and Pilate as they assume that this was God's judgement on them.

2 *By saying 'greater sinners' he was showing where they were mistaken — namely that they believed suffering was a judgement of God.*

3 *They to repent from their own sin.*

They would they perish on the day of judgement being excluded from the presence of God.

4 *He phrases the questions to show the way they were thinking.*

6 *He told them this parable to illustrate the point he was making.*
Vineyards contained other fruit trees.

The man' who intercedes represents Jesus (?)

7 *Naturally it took three years for a fig tree to mature.*
(Spiritually, it is an indication of complete change.)

8 *The man who takes care of the vineyard / who appeals is Jesus(?)*

He dug around it to 'root prune' it and shock it into producing fruit.

9 *The 'stay of execution' was a second chance / an act of grace.*

- 3) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

The owner expects fruit — that is why the fig tree was planted.

4) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

To some self-righteous listeners, Jesus warned them to 'repent or they would perish'. We all are graciously given time in this life to do so.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP *All must repent and bear the fruit of it.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 3,5**

KV *Unless you repent, you too will perish.*

LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

2 *God challenges our self-righteousness*

3 *God requires repentance of everybody*

6 *God is the owner of His creation*

God expects a return – compliance / worship from all

7 *God is prepared to make 'tough' choices!*

b) His grace?

8 *God (in Jesus) is prepared to give us a second chance*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

8 *Jesus intercedes for us*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

2 *stop being self-righteous / judgemental*

3 *Repent for your own sin*

5 *Fear the consequences of 'perishing'*

9 *Concentrate on bearing fruit*

Beware exhausting god's impatience

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 2

Luke 13:10-17

Rejoice. The Lord delivers us from the evil one!

Background

This is the last time Luke records Jesus teaching *in a synagogue*. The right use of the Sabbath was an on-going controversy between Jesus and his opponents.

The fourth commandment (Exodus 20:8-11) instructed Jews, their children, servants and even animals to treat the seventh day as 'holy'. As God had 'ceased work' on it, they were to do the same. The rabbis invented many details on how to keep the Sabbath by defining what did and did not constitute 'work'. Forbidden activities listed thirty nine actions relating to creating things or controlling the environment: making bread, clothes and leather, or building. A rest day for even animals implied they should be treated well, so they had rules on how they could be brought out and given water. But they had become so legalistic they had lost sight of the spirit and purpose of the law, as if it were more important than the people who were meant to benefit. So Jesus said: *The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27)*

Word List

10	<i>Sabbath</i>	7th day of the week, sunset Friday to sunset Sat. 'teaching on the Sabbaths' (lit) 'And it came to pass ... on a sabbath' (14:1)
	<i>synagogue</i>	Building where Jews meet to worship God.
	<i>crippled</i>	Possibly <i>spondylitis deformans</i> ; where the bones of the spine have been fused into a rigid mass
14	<i>synagogue ruler</i>	Person responsible for arrangements at services
	<i>work</i>	<i>see above</i> . Healing was a creative act, so they saw it as work and therefore forbidden that day.
16	<i>daughter of Abraham</i>	<i>i.e.</i> a Jewess, one of God's covenant people - (only use in whole Bible).
17	<i>humiliated, delighted</i>	both tenses are continuous

Bible connections

10	<i>Jesus teaching in synagogues</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 4:23
	<i>Sabbath</i>	<i>see</i> Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:1-21
	<i>Jesus and the Sabbath</i>	Matthew 12:1-13; Mark 2:23 – 3:6; Luke 6:1-11; 14:1-6
17	<i>humiliated</i>	<i>lit.</i> 'Put to shame' (<i>c.f.</i> 2 Corinthians 7:14; 1Peter 3:16)

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 10 *Why on the Sabbath?*
- 11 *Why was the woman there? How did she know that it was 'by a spirit'?
Why eighteen years?*
- 12 *Why did Jesus call her out?
How did Jesus know that she is set free?*
- 13 *Why didn't Jesus wait for a response?*
- 14 *Why did the synagogue ruler say it 'to the people'?
How could they be healed by someone other than Jesus?*
- 15 *Why plural – 'hypocrites' though he has been speaking to the 'synagogue ruler' (singular).
Why was He so rude and abrupt?*
- 16 *Who had kept her bound?
What answer was anticipated?*
- 17 *Why were they 'humiliated'.
What other 'wonderful things' was He doing?*

What surprises or confuses you?

- 12 *Jesus' initiative in calling her forward*

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 11 *Eighteen people died at Siloam. (13:4)*
- 15 *Hypocrites - only other use in Luke (12:56)*

b) individual book,

- 10 *Sabbath (4:16,31; 6:1)*
- 11 *Crippled (14:13,21)
Woman (7:37; 8:43; 10:38; 15:8; 16:18)*
- 13 *Praised God (2:28; 7:16; 18:43; 23:43)*
- 14 *Synagogue (4:16,33; 6:6; 8:41)*
- 16 *Satan (10:18; 11:18; 22:3; 22:31)*
- 17 *Rejoice (1:14)*

c) whole bible,

- 10 *The Sabbath was made for man not man for the Sabbath. (Mark 2:27f)*

- 12 *If any man hear my voice I will come in. (Revelation 3:20)*
15 *Speaking to the devil c.f. (Matthew 16:23)*

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

10 *Jesus was in the habit of teaching on the Sabbath.*

He was allowed to up to now, because He was recognised as a Rabbi.

11 *Women were allowed in, unlike in the Temple.*

He knew it was 'a spirit'.

18 years????

12 *Jesus took the initiative.*

Jesus knew because He had given His / The Word.

13 *Jesus wait for a response because He had spoken?(?)*

14 *He spoke 'to the people' because he knew he was wrong.*

There are other (inferior) powers at work.

15 *The Lord shows Luke's belief that Jesus was divine.*

Plural because Jesus was speaking to him and his likes.

He was so rude and abrupt because He was speaking to the devil.

16 *Satan had kept her bound.*

The answer He might have expected was, 'No. This woman should not be kept bound.'(?)

17 *They were 'humiliated' and put to shame for, though teachers, they were shown to disobey the Word of God.*

The other 'wonderful things' were: healing (7:1ff); calming the storm (8:22ff); raising the dead (8:40ff); driving out demons (11:14ff); teaching (12:1-13)

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

Jesus is demonstrating the healing is all of grace.

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

On one of the Sabbaths, Jesus was teaching. He spied a crippled woman and initiated a complete healing. The religious authorities resisted this. Jesus denounced them as 'hypocrites'. His opponents were put to shame but the people glorified God.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP *Jesus graciously delivers 'the least' from the power of the evil one.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 12**

KV *Woman you are set free from your infirmity.*

LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

12 *The Lord is in total control of Satan.*

13 *God is worthy of our praise.*

15 *The Lord sees it and calls it as it is.*

17 *The Lord shames all His critics.*

b) His grace?

12 *God calls us forward without any input from ourselves.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

12 *Jesus heals.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

11 *However long you have been bound, look to Jesus.*

12 *Pray – 'deliver us from the evil one'. (Matthew 6:13)*

13 *Praise God for 'straightening you out'!*

14 *Do not let religious rules obstruct the work of God.*

15 *Children of the promise have the right to be set free from sin.*

17 *Wait on God to silence His critics.*

Rejoice in all the glorious things the Lord does.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 3

Luke 13:18-21

The rule of God - all included, all encompassing.

Background

The Kingdom of God (or Heaven) is the central theme of Jesus' preaching in Matthew, Mark and Luke. It is NOW (eg 9:27; 10:9; 17:21; 21:31) but at the same time NOT YET. (11:2; 13:29; 19:11) In the Lord's Prayer, he taught His disciples to pray for it to come while, in Himself, the kingdom had actually arrived, though people would not understand *how* till they acknowledged Jesus as King.

"A parable is a story told to make a **single main point**, unlike an Allegory. It is a roundabout way of speaking, which can *illustrate* (shed light), or be a way of *hiding* truth in plain sight from those not ready to follow it (Matthew 13:13-17).

"In a sense, all parables are 'of the Kingdom' in that they all describe in some way the relationship between God and people - the King and his subjects. So it is possible to find God and ourselves within *all* Jesus' parables, and to identify the subject as some aspect of our relationship to 'the King'."*

Sinapsis nigra (black mustard) is the likely plant referred to here. It can grow up to twelve feet tall. Elsewhere Jesus referred to the smallness of its seeds.

In the Old Testament, birds roosting in branches are often a symbol for the nations of the earth (Ezekiel 17:23; 31:6; Daniel 4:12,21). Here they might just be confirmation of how much the plant, *i.e.* the Kingdom, will grow.

Leaven (yeast, mixed with flour to make bread 'rise') is regularly used in Jewish thought for influence, sometimes bad, but here standing for the disturbing/permeating/creative power of people living with Jesus as King.

Word List

18 *Kingdom of God* see above

20 *large amount* three fifths of a bushel, about 22 litres

Bible connections

Parallel passages: Mark 4:30-32; Matthew 13:31-33

18 *parables about the Kingdom of God/Heaven* see Matthew chapter 13

19 *garden* - Eden (Genesis 2:8); Kings (Esther 1:5ff) the beloved
(Song of Songs 4:12ff) Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36;
Mark 14:32 cf John 18:1,26); resurrection (19:41; 20:17)

* Much condensed from the *Hearing the Word* volume on *Parables*

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 18 *When was 'then'?*
Why does he ask a question?
Why does he compare in both examples - what it is like?
Who is he asking it to?
What is the Kingdom of God
- 19 *Why a mustard seed?*
Why a garden
What does the birds perching in the tree mean?
- 20 *Why does he repeat it 'again'?*
Why 'a woman'?
Why yeast?
What does worked through it mean?
Why so much flour – 3 sats / 22 litres?

What surprises or confuses you?

Why is it so abrupt?

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passage,

- 18 *then Woman set free from infirmity (13:12)*
Teacher put to shame, people rejoiced (13:17)

b) individual book,

- 18 *the Kingdom of God 31 references to it in Luke's Gospel*
Only two parables in Luke's Gospel about the Kingdom
Proclaiming the Kingdom (4:43; 9:2)
- 19 *Mustard seed (17:6)*
Three – tabernacles (9:33) loaves (11:5) years (13:7)

c) whole bible,

- 19 *The things that are not (1 Cor 1:28)*
The most humble birth of Jesus (Matt 1; Luke 1)
Birds of the air (Matt 6:26)
Birds = nations (Ez 17:23; 31:6; Dan 4:12, 21)
The holy city = 12,000 furlongs (2.5K miles) square (Rev 21:16)
- 20 *3 seahs / measures of flour (Gen 18:6; Ju 6:19; 1 Sam 1:24) = approx. 22 litres*

*Matthew continues the text (Mathew 14:34f)
God may be all in all (1 Corinthinas 15:28)
Every knee will bow (Phil 2:10)*

d) Bible story

See study 1.

LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

18 *'Then' is a continuation on teaching about God's judgement on our lives beginning 11:37.*

He asks a question as an invitation to think

He gives a memorable image

He is asking it of those who had witnessed the healing of the crippled woman on the Sabbath.

The Kingdom of God is the unchallenged rule of God a king

19 *A mustard seed is tiny but grows big*

A garden in the Bible is a symbol for God's provision and rule

The birds perching may signify the nations

20 *He repeat it 'again' because he is making a different point*

'A woman' because they were the ones who made bread.

Yeast because it is living but too small to see 'invisible'.

'Worked through' meant it grew /spread?

Why so much flour - three sats (22 litres)?

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

It is so abrupt as this shows it is a continuation of the text

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

God choses to start small with His Kingdom but it will grow to embrace all nations and reach all creation.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP *The Kingdom of God is to be meditated on*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 18**

KV *What is the Kingdom of God like. What shall I compare it to?*

LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

18 *God / His kingdom is our focus.*

19 *God rules over all peoples.*

21 *God rules everywhere / over every single one.*

b) His grace?

19 *We may 'roost' in the Kingdom of Jesus.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

21 *The Kingdom of Jesus is all encompassing.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do ?

18 *Consider the Kingdom of God.*

19 *Note - The Kingdom of God grows in size.*

21 *Note - The Kingdom of God spreads.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 4

Luke 13:22-30

Be last, with Jesus!

Background

Jesus is continuing his journey to Jerusalem, without haste, with many pauses for teaching in both large towns and small villages, in the open air or houses.

The rabbis held widely differing views on *how many* people would be saved. However, most thought that all Israel would be saved, except for a few blatant sinners who excluded themselves. They did not expect Gentiles, whom they despised, to be included.

Jesus says there will be many surprises in the kingdom.

See Study 3, page 13, for comments on understanding Parables.

Word List

- 22 *Jerusalem* the capital and the Temple were there
- 24 *make every effort* this command is plural, *i.e.* all listening. A technical term for competing in Games; whole-hearted action.
Greek Word from which we get English word - 'agony'
- will try... will say* future tense, implying a coming day of judgment.
- 28 *weeping, gnashing of teeth* signs of mourning and deep distress
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob* Founding fathers of the tribe that became Israel. Some Jews, - *e.g.* Pharisees - believed in an afterlife, spent in the company of people already with God, like Abraham *et al.* (Others, *e.g.* Sadducees, did not believe in supernatural beings or events, including resurrection.)

Bible connections

- 22 *Jesus making his way to Jerusalem* *see* Luke 9:51; Matthew 16:21
- 24 *narrow door* *see* Matthew 7:13
- 27 *evildoers* *c.f.* Psalm 6:8
- 29 *people from E & W, N & S i.e. Gentiles well represented*
see Isaiah 45:6; 49:12 Matthew 8:11
- feast* *see* Study 7, p 23

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

22 *Why 'then'?*

What was He teaching?

Why was He heading for Jerusalem?

23 *Who asked Him?*

Why were they asking about this?

What were they to be saved from?

How were they to be saved?

24 *Why 'them' when it was 'someone' who asked Him?*

Why does Jesus give him a command?

What does the narrow door 'mean'?

Why does He add 'I tell you'?

Why would they not be able?

Why do they say 'Lord'?

25 *Who is 'the owner'?*

What is 'the house'?

When will the door be closed?

Why does He say 'you'?

27 *What does 'knowing' mean (given that He ate with them)?*

Why 'evil doers'? How had they shown it? How did He know that?

28 *Why Abraham, Isaac, Jacob?*

How will they see them and the prophets?

Why will they be thrown out?

29 *What does East, West, North and South imply?*

Where is the centre for the feast?

30 *Who is the last and who the first?*

What surprises or confuses you?

25 *Is it 'sir' or 'Lord'?*

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

22 *Jerusalem (13:34)*

25 *'Sir' means 'Lord'. (c.f. 12:42; 13:15,23)*

28 *Kingdom of God (13:18)*

30 *The last, first – the crippled woman (13:11ff)*

- b) individual book,
- 22 *He knew He was going to die? (9:22; 18:31)*
Teaching about 'the Kingdom of God' (8:1; 9:2)
- 23 *'Who can be saved?' (18:26)*
Judging others (6:37)
- 28 *He looked up and saw Abraham. (16:13)*
- c) whole bible,
- 23 *Many will say 'Lord, Lord'..... I will tell them plainly, I never knew you.*
- 24 *Narrow gate (Matthew 7:13,14)*
- 25 *The earth belongs unto the Lord and all that is therein. (Psalm 24:1)*
The Lord looks at the heart. (1 Samuel 16:7)
Today is the day of salvation. (2 Corinthians 6:2)
- 27 *That they know you (John 17:3)*
Banish the evildoers. (Psalm 125:5)
- 28 *Gnashing of teeth (Matthew:8:12; 13:42,50; 22:12; 25:30)*
God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exodus 3:16)
- d) Bible story
- See study 1.

LEARN

- 1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?
- 22 *'Then' because it follows on.*
He was teaching about the kingdom of God.
He was heading for Jerusalem to die.
- 23 *A person witnessing His journey to Jerusalem.*
They were asking because they were judging others(?)
They were to be saved from the judgement.
They were to be saved by becoming righteous.
- 24 *He answered this man but it applied to many.*
Jesus gave him the command because he was the Judge.

The 'narrow door' means that not many would get through it.

He adds 'I tell you' to show that he would be the one who would judge.

'Not be able' for they were not part of the Kingdom of God

25 *Jesus is 'the owner'.*

'The house' is the Kingdom of God.

The door be closed on the day of judgement.

He says 'you' because He knows they are not in the Kingdom.

They call Him Lord in the same way as the questioner calls Jesus 'Lord' . (23)

27 *Know mean they were in His presence but not in relationship with Him.*

'Evil doers' because they did not receive / believe in Him.

He knew it because God the Father / Holy Spirit had shown Him.

28 *They were the patriarchs of the faithful.*

Those not in the Kingdom will be able to see those who are in it.

They will be 'thrown out' because they are not part of the Kingdom.

29 *East, West, North & South implies all mankind.*

The feast will be held in Jerusalem.

30 *The last are those like the crippled, demonised woman (13:11)*

Jesus was last (Philippians 2:7f) so should His disciples be. (Mark 10:43; John 13:12ff)

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

Jesus has them call the owner 'Lord', because it was Himself that they would be addressing.

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

On His way to Jerusalem to die Jesus was asked self-righteously if only a few folk would be saved. He tells a parable showing that the questioner may be one of who surprisingly to them are rejected as evildoers.

Jesus showed that the real Jews will include non-jews from all nations – the criteria being those who are 'last', like Jesus.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP People who think God ought to include them are excluded from His Kingdom in preference for those who know they are unworthy.

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 30**

KV Indeed, there are those who are last who will be first and first who will be last.

LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

22 God wants people to know the truth.

24 God expects us to 'try'.

28 God's rule and justice will be plain for all to see.

b) His grace?

28 Jesus keeps us a place at His feast.

29 All peoples are welcome.

30 God ensures that the last shall be first.

c) Jesus and His salvation?

25 Jesus is Lord ('sir') and will be judge.

25 Jesus will judge justly.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

22 Ask God good questions and be prepared for answers that will stretch you.

24 Strive to enter with Jesus.

Be earnest - prioritise Jesus.

25 Note - knowing about God and seeing God at work is not the same as knowing Him.

28 Some will be cast out for the presence of God but will be aware of His Kingdom.

29 Expect a feast for people of every kind.

30 Aim to be 'the last' like Jesus.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 5

Luke 13:31-35

Trust the Lord, now!

Background information and Word List

As in any religion, there were bad and good Pharisees. The Jews had seven categories for them and only one was 'God-loving' Perhaps these were good ones!

Jews used *fox* as a symbol of a sly or insignificant or worthless person, or as a symbol of destructiveness. So Jesus was being rude! It contrasts with Jesus like Himself to a hen. Herod is the only person Jesus is recorded as having treated with contempt.

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|--|
| 31 | <i>Pharisees</i> | 'the separated ones', known for their very strict interpretation of the Law, including adding multiple details |
| | <i>Herod</i> | AD 6-39, known as Herod Antipas, younger son of Herod the Great. He inherited the Galilean and Perean portion of his father's kingdom. His brother Archelaus was deposed, Herod succeeded and Judea became a Roman province. |
| 32 | <i>third day</i> | <i>i.e.</i> 'in a short time' <i>or</i> 'at the end of a definite time' <i>or</i> an oblique reference to His resurrection (<i>c.f.</i> 18:33) |
| | <i>reach my goal</i> | the end of His work in that region <i>or</i> the completion of His work of redemption |

Bible connections

- | | | |
|-------|---|--|
| 32 | <i>Jesus' goal</i> | <i>see</i> Hebrews 2:10 |
| 34-35 | <i>Lamenting over Jerusalem</i> | parallel Matthew 23:37 |
| 34 | <i>God's longing for his people</i> | <i>e.g.</i> Hosea chapter 3 |
| 34 | <i>Israel's history of resisting God</i> | How the early church understood Jesus' words: Stephen in Acts 7:9, 27, 36, 37, 39-40, 42, 48, 51-53 |
| 34 | <i>wings</i> | a) <i>Protective</i> : Ruth 2:12; Psalm 17:8; 36:7 ; 57:1. <i>Cf</i> In the most Holy part of the Temple were two figures representing Cherubim, whose wings stretched out <i>over</i> the box with the tablets of stone listing the 10 commandments 1 Kings 6:27
b) <i>supportive</i> : on eagles' wings Deuteronomy 32:11 |
| 35 | <i>house left desolate</i> | <i>see</i> Jeremiah 12:17; 22:5 |
| | <i>blessed....in the name of the Lord</i> | Psalm 118:26 |

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

31 *At what time did this happen?*

Pharisees came to Him from where?

Where was "this place"?

How had Herod showed he wanted to kill Him?

32 *Why did He call him a fox?*

Why drive out demons and heal?

Why today and tomorrow?

What is significant about the third day?

What is His goal?

33 *Why 'in any case'?*

Why does He call himself a prophet?

Why does He say die outside of Jerusalem?

34 *Why does he repeat Jerusalem?*

When did they kill the prophets etc.?

How long has 'He longed to gather them'?

How is your house 'desolate'?

When is He referring to?

Why would they say 'blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'?

35 *What is 'your house'?*

How is it desolate?

When will they see Him again?

What is the significance of 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'?

What surprises or confuses you?

31 *Why did the Pharisees want him to leave?*

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

33 *Jerusalem, the centre for the feast. (29)*

b) individual book,

31 *'Pharisees' - negative (6:7; 11:39; 11:53; 12:1)*

Herod had wanted to see Jesus for a long time (23:8)

33 *Set out for Jerusalem (9:51)*

- He could not be 'touched' till he reached Jerusalem. (4:30)
- 34 Servants .. my son...rejected (20:11-13)
C.f. Martha, Martha (10:41); Simon, Simon (22:31)
- 35 Saying 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord' (19:38)
- c) whole bible,
- 33 He could not be 'touched' till His time. (John 7:30)
- 34 Killed prophets etc. (2 Kings 21:16; 2 Chronicles 24:21; Jeremiah 26:20-23)
I have longed. (Luke 15:20)
Contrast -shadow of your wings (Ps 57:1)
C.f. Martha, Martha (10:41); Simon, Simon (22:31)
- 35 Kings palace come to ruin (Jeremiah 22:5)
'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'. (Psalm 118:26)
Said AFTER entry in Mathews gospel (Mathew 21:1-11...23:39)
Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord
(Philippians 2:10)
Call to the mountains and rocks, fall on us (Revelation 6:16)

d) Bible story

See study 1.

LEARN

- 1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?
- 31 This happened as he was making his way to Jerusalem/After he had spoken of the narrow door.
Pharisees were local. (7:36)
"This place" was where they were / lived!
Herod had not showed he wanted to kill Him. It was his father
- 32 A fox is generally associated with vicious cunning?
Exorcism and healing were signs of the Kingdom?
Today and tomorrow represents two days.
The third day was when he would be raised from the dead.
His goal was to die in Jerusalem (c.f. 33)
- 33 'In any case' because the goal would be reached in the third day it was not a cause to rest up but rather press on.
He calls himself 'a prophet' because he was THE prophet?

- He could not / would not be killed till he reached Jerusalem.*
- 34 *He repeats 'Jerusalem' to show the intensity of His feeling.*
They kill the prophets etc. because they reject the one who sent them – God.
He longed to gather them since the nation had been formed.
The house 'desolate' because they have rejected Messiah.
He refers to His arrival at Jerusalem / His crowning for all to see.
They say 'blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord' because they would recognise Him as Messiah.
- 35 *'Your house' is your heritage / descendants (?)*
It is desolate in that there is none left.
They will see Him when every eye sees Him – the Last Day
The significance is this is the recognition of the Messiah.

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

The Pharisees wanted rid of him. They had discussed 'what they might do with Him'. (6:11)

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

The Pharisees tried to move Jesus on. Jesus would not be hustled for the had a date for His death and resurrection in Jerusalem.

He calls them 'Jerusalem' and regrets how often they have rejected God's loving care of them, and warns them of their rejection of Him and its consequences

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP *Only by acknowledging Jesus will you be able to see Him in His true light.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 35b**

KV *I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'.*

LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

32 *God knows what we are like*

God will not be hurried to suit our agenda

33 *God determines when His people will die*

b) His grace?

34 *God's heart longs for us*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

35 *Jesus is coming in glory a second time for ALL to see*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) How might God have wanted the people *then* to respond?

31 *Beware when those who oppose you give you 'good advice'*

Don't find excuses / pass the buck of facing challenges of God

34 *Share Jesus passion for those who reject Him*

Note - We can resist the purpose of God

35 *Beware, those who reject Jesus – He will return*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 6

Luke 14:1-14

Humble yourselves that God might exalt you

Background

Healing on the Sabbath was still an issue, *see* Study 2. This time Jesus asks the questions, but they did not answer.

At banquets the basic item of furniture was the *triclinium*, a low couch for three people. Three couches were arranged in a U-shape. Guests reclined on their left elbows and ate with their right hands. The host took the place of highest honour, the central position of the couch on the right arm of the U. The most honoured guest was on his right and the next most honoured to his left. Then, in descending order of importance, came the three on the base of the U, and along the left arm of the U, which could have more couches if necessary. *Diagram p6*.

If there was no servant, the person at the 'lowest' place had to wash the others' feet. Noting the scramble for places, Jesus comments by telling a parable.

Word List

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--|
| 1 | <i>prominent Pharisee</i> | Greek may mean <i>a ruler</i> , perhaps a member of the Sanhedrin who was also a Pharisee. |
| | <i>eat on the Sabbath</i> | All meal preparation was done the day before to avoid working on ('breaking') the Sabbath. |
| 2 | <i>dropsy</i> | Old term for oedema, observable swelling from fluid accumulation in body tissues |

Bible connections

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 3 | <i>healing on the Sabbath</i> | <i>see also</i> Luke 4:38; 6:6; 13:14; Mark 1:21; John 5:9; 9:14 |
| 8 | <i>place of honour</i> | <i>see</i> Proverbs 25:6-7 |
| 11 | <i>humility leads to true exaltation</i> | <i>see</i> 18:14; Matt 23:12; 18:4; 1 Peter 5:6 |
| 14 | <i>reward at the resurrection</i> | <i>see</i> Isaiah 25:6; Matthew 26:29; Luke 13:29; Rev 19:9 |

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 1 *Why one 'Sabbath'?*
 What does eating imply?
 What is a 'prominent' Pharisee?
 Why were they watching him carefully?
- 2 *Why is 'dropsy' significant?*
- 3 *Why did Jesus 'ask the Pharisees'?*
- 4 *Why did they remain silent?*
 Why 'so,'?
 Why did He 'take hold of the man'?
 Why did He 'send him away'?
- 6 *Why did they have nothing to say?*
- 7 *How is His noticing relevant?*
 How is this a parable – 'when you...'?
 What is the point of the parable?
- 8 *Why a wedding feast?*
 What is 'the place of honour'?
- 9 *Why does he not move you just one back?*
- 10 *What does calling him 'friend' mean?*
- 12 *Why dinner not a wedding feast?*
 What does He mean – never invite 'friends'?!
 What is wrong with being invited back?
- 14 *How will you be blessed and repaid?*
 Who are the righteous?
 When will they be raised?

What surprises or confuses you?

- 1 *What is Jesus doing eating with the Pharisees and /why are they eating with Him if Herod is threatening?*

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 1 *Jesus had healed on a Sabbath. (13:10ff)*
- 14 *Blessed (13:35; 14:15)*

b) individual book,

- 1 Eating with a pharisee (7:39; 11:37)
Eating with tax collectors and sinners (5:30; 15:2)
Doing what is unlawful on Sabbath (6:1,2)
Judge not lest you be judged (6:37)
- 3 Lawful to heal on the Sabbath (4:38; 6:6; 13:13)
- 10 Friend (7:34; 11:5)
- 11 Humble exalted (18:14; c.f. Matthew 23:12; c.f. 1 Peter 5:6)
All of you, cloth yourselves in humility towards one another because, 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble' (1 Peter 5:5b; Proverbs 3:34)
- 13 Poor and blind (4:18,19)
- 14 Blessed (13:35; 14:15)
Not to call the 'righteous' (5:32; 15:7)

c) whole bible,

- 3 Let no debt remain outstanding except the continuing debt to love one another for he who loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law. (Romans 13:8)
- 5 Help for an ox or donkey fallen into well (Exodus 21:33)
- 8 Wedding supper (feast) of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9)
- 10 Promoted from a lower place (Proverbs 27:5)
The lowest place c.f. Jesus (Philippians 2:7)
Friends of Jesus (John 15:15)
- 11 Exalted (rare in New Testament – rather of God Acts 2:33; 5:31; Philippians 1:20; 2:9; Hebrews 7:26)
- 13 Who sinned that this man is born blind (John 9:2)
- 14 Treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20)

Bible story

d) Bible story

See study 1.

LEARN

- 1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?
 - 1 Lit 'it came to pass' is used frequently, especially in Luke.
Eating implies social acceptance.
A 'prominent' Pharisee as a community leader(?)
They were watching him carefully to find fault.

- 2 *'Dropsy' bloats you and makes you immobile.*
- 3 *Jesus 'asked the Pharisees' because he was aware of their fault finding gaze and want to turn the tables on / to teach them.*
- 4 *They remain silent because when God speaks he is not to be argued with.*
'So' because he wanted to show the Pharisees.
He took hold of the man because he wanted to demonstrate it was He who healed him.
He 'send him away' to demonstrate can't the healing was complete.
- 6 *They had nothing to say as you can't argue with God.*
- 7 *His noticing showed he was acting in response to the Holy Spirit (?)*
This a parable because the Bible says it is!
'Everyone who is exalted will be humbled'
- 8 *A wedding feast - points to 'the Lambs' wedding supper (?)*
'The place of honour' is nearest the host.
- 9 *He doesn't move you one back as it is all or nothing.*
- 10 *'Friend' means acceptance and recognition.*
- 12 *'Wedding feast' had a particular application to the end of time(?)*
Do not invite 'friends' is an hyperbole.
Nothing per se, but if that is the reason you invite, it is done in vain.
- 14 *You will be blessed and repaid in Heaven.*
The righteous are those who put themselves 'last' and trust in Jesus.
They will be raised at the marriage feast of the lamb / on judgment Day.

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

He eats with all who will invite Him – tax collectors, sinners, Pharisees etc.

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

Jesus confronts those who judge others because of their religious observance. He tells a parable warning them not to judge one another or they will be humbled. He instructs his host to welcome and promote others and God at the resurrection will repay them.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP *Humble yourself and don't judge others and God will repay you at the resurrection of the righteous.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 11**

KV *Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted.*

LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

1 God will 'eat' with any who will invite Him.

3 God knows what is in our minds.

11 God is the judge – He exalts and humbles.

b) His grace?

13 God welcomes those who have nothing to give

c) Jesus and His salvation?

4b Jesus wants to be recognised and acknowledged

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

1 Watch Christ/ Christians carefully but not with a critical spirit.

5 Don't let your religion stop you from doing good.

6 Be silent before God.

7 Do not compete for status.

10 Do not promote yourself – allow others to do it.

11 Humble yourself before your fellow man and wait on God to exalt you at the resurrection.

13 Be gracious in the way you treat others.

14 Expect a reward in the next life.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 7

Luke 14:15-24

God's banquet is for 'the poor'

Background

Jews had a picture to describe what would happen when God broke into history and the golden days arrived: the *Messianic Banquet*. They thought though that this would be for Jews only.

In Palestine when someone planned a feast, *the day* was announced long beforehand and invitations sent out and accepted. *The hour* was not announced until the day came and all was ready. Then servants were sent out to summon the already invited guests. To accept the invitation beforehand then refuse it when the day came was a grave and serious insult.

This 'double invitation' is seen in Esther 5:8 with 6:14.

Word List

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|---|
| 15 | <i>blessed</i> | Truly happy, because of God's favour |
| 18 | <i>all alike</i> | The greek may also mean 'at once'. |
| 19 | <i>five yoke</i> | <i>i.e.</i> Five pairs. To pull a plough or cart, two animals worked side by side, joined by a wooden bar across the shoulders called a yoke. |
| 23 | <i>compel/make</i> | Successfully persuade / Don't take 'no' for an answer! |

Bible connections

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Parallel Passage</i> | | <i>c.f.</i> Matthew 22:2-14 |
| 15 | <i>feast</i> | <i>see</i> Isaiah 25:6; Luke 13:29; Revelation 19:9 |
| 23 | <i>compel</i> | <i>see</i> Irresistible grace – that none may boast Ephesians 2:8,9a |
| 24 | <i>consequence of refusal of invitation</i> | <i>see</i> Matthew 21:43; Acts 13:46 |

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 15 *Who were at the table?*
What had he heard?
Why did he say "Blessed is the man..."
What does 'eating at the feast' imply?
- 17 *Why were they invited?*
Who is the servant?
- 18 *Why did they all make excuses?*
- 19 *What is the significance of 'field... oxen....married'?*
Why did they ask to be 'excused'?
- 21 *Why was the owner angry?*
Why only the alley of the town? c.f. roads and country lanes (23)
- 22 *What does 'still room' imply?*
- 23 *Why 'make them come in'?*
Why did he want his house to be 'full'.
- 24 *Why would those who had been invited not get a taste of the banquet?*
What does a taste of the banquet mean?

What surprises or confuses you?

- 16 *Why doesn't it say that Jesus told a parable?*

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 15 *At the table (of a prominent Pharisee) (14:1)*
- 21 *The poor, the crippled, the blind, the lame. (14:13)*

a) individual book,

- 15 *Blessed is he (13:35)*
Eat at the feast in the Kingdom of God (13:29)
- 18 *The dangers of pleasures of this world (Luke 8:14)*

c) whole bible,

- 17 *Come (Rev 22:17)*
Come to me all you who are heavy laden (Matt 11:28)
- 18 *Without excuse (Rmns 1:20)*
Yet you refuse to come to me to have life (Jn 5:40)

- 20 Newly married exempted from active service for a year (Deut 24:5)
- 23 Compel (v unusual word) cf Simon of Cyrene (Mk 15:21)
- 24 Taste and see that the Lord is good (Ps 34:8)
- Servant of the Lord – Jesus (Is 42:1)

d) Bible story

See study 1.

LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

15 The Pharisees' friends / similarly 'righteous' were at the table?

He heard about the resurrection of the righteous.

He said "Blessed is the man..." because he considered himself one.

'Eating at the feast' implies he is accepted as part of the celebrations.

17 They were invited at the master's pleasure.

The servant is he who does the master's will.

18 They all make excuses because there was something they would rather do.

19 The significance is ascending importance - an object, livestock, a wife.

They asked to be 'excused' because they had a commitment / obligation.

21 The owner was angry because he had been slighted / rejected.

the alley of the town represented those who were related;

roads and country lanes (23) represented those not related?

22 'Still room' implies the number of guests was not complete.

23 'Make them' shows the master's desire to have 'a full house'.

He wanted his house to be 'full' / that as many as possible should be included.

24 They would not get a taste of the banquet because they had rejected the invitation / the master.

A 'taste' means acceptance - they would eat with the master.

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

16 It doesn't it say that Jesus told a parable because it was in the 'same breath' as the preceding one.

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

When Jesus heard the presumption of a fellow guest, He went on to tell of a another parable of great banquet. Those who were invited to a banquet refused, making excuses. So, the poor of the town were invited. When this did not fill the house, the master told the servant to compel those out in the country to come in. There would be no room at all for those who were originally invited but refused.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP *Only the 'poor' will have a place at the banquet in the Kingdom of God.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 24**

KV *I tell you not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet*

LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

15 *God will not be patronised!*

24 *God's judgement is final for those who refuse Him.*

b) His grace?

21 *God invites the poor, crippled, blind, lame, those in the roads and country – the 'have nots'.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

17 *The invitations of Jesus to us is to 'come'.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

15 *Resist self-confidence when looking to the Kingdom of God*

15 *Beware of speaking proudly before Jesus*

16 *Hear God's invitation to you*

17 *the invitation of the Lord is for 'now'*

18 *Beware of excuses to avoid the invitation of the Lord*

21 *There is no excuse for refusing Jesus – even matrimony!*

If you are poor, crippled and blind and lame – you are invited to the feast!

24 *Note – the originally invited who refuse will not get in*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Sharing the Word

Use

Hearing the Word can be used alone, with one other person, or in a group

Preparing for a group

Time put in alone beforehand will greatly benefit time spent together.

Work through the stages - LOOK, LEARN, LISTEN, LIVE.

Write down your own questions and answers. *

Format

- a. LOOK - Any questions? (If answer is known or not!)
Relevant cross references in rest of the Bible?
- b. LEARN - Answers to questions?
- c. LISTEN - Key verse and Main Point?
- d. LIVE - What does it show about God /His grace/ Jesus?
What should I do

n.b. Leave plenty of time for the LIVE section!

By also eating together and a time of prayer, you will have shared something of the life of the early church! (Acts 2:42-47)

Remember!

As we gather round God's Word -

- a) Listen to the views of others.
- b) Make room for the novice. (They can join in too when you start by listing 'Any questions'.)
- c) Don't let the 'knowledgeable' dominate. Encourage everyone to think for themselves.
- d) Try to include others, especially 'seekers', in your time together.

* The **process** is explained and practiced in a four-hour course, suitable for all, called '**An Introduction to 'Hearing the Word'**

<https://hearingtheword.org.uk>

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