

HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

Luke 22 – 24
Work Book

Hearing the Word Luke 22 – 24 Work Book

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Nigel Barge, January 2021

Scripture Quotations taken from

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Resources

The *New Bible Dictionary* 3rd edition, published by Inter Varsity Press
The *New Bible Commentary* 21st century edition. A commentary on every Bible book, IVP

www.blueletterbible.org

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* comes last 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 been in 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' (moves determinedly) 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 then 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 (10:2)
- 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
3:22	God says 'you are my Son';		
4:34	The Holy one of God	5:34	the bridegroom

Study 1

Luke 22:1-13

Know God is in control - always.

Background

Preparing to kill: Jerusalem's population at Passover went from c30,000 to over 2 million, according to contemporary historians. The religious authorities had decided to kill Jesus but feared the crowds who hung on his words (19:47-48).

Preparing to betray: Judas is always listed last in every list of the 12 disciples. He was their Treasurer and a thief. He criticised Mary using precious ointment to anoint Jesus' feet, saying it should have been sold and cash given to the poor. Actually, he wanted it for himself. So, he was already guilty of deception, even before this betrayal (John 12:6; 13:29).

Preparing to celebrate: When God delivered his people from slavery in Egypt, the final plague killed all the first-born sons of Egyptians but spared Israelite sons. God 'passed over' houses with lamb's blood on door-lintels. By Jesus' time, men were expected to come to Jerusalem for the annual Passover Feast.

Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover are almost synonymous terms. This upper room meal does not include lamb, so was probably on Thursday, the day before Passover, when the victim (a lamb or kid), was killed. All four gospels agree Jesus' death happened on the Friday.

Word List

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|--|
| 1 | <i>unleavened bread</i> | During this Feast all yeast was removed from houses. |
| 3 | <i>Satan</i> | <i>lit</i> 'Accuser'; the most evil being, the devil, who tempted Jesus at the start of his ministry Luke 4:2ff. |
| | <i>Iscaiot</i> | Hebrew, probably meaning 'man of Kerioth' (a place) |
| 4 | <i>betray</i> | <i>lit</i> Hand over |
| 5 | <i>agreed</i> | 'Covenanted', <i>c.f.</i> new covenant (20) |
| 7 | <i>lamb</i> | Ritually slaughtered at the Temple (until AD 70) |
| | <i>Peter and John</i> | Two of the twelve disciples. They were from Galilee. |
| 10 | <i>man carrying...jar</i> | Women usually carried water <i>jars</i> ; men carried water <i>skins</i> |
| 11 | <i>The Teacher</i> | respectful form of address for a rabbi, <i>i.e.</i> teacher |
| 12 | <i>guest room</i> | Often upstairs. Same word translated <i>the inn</i> Luke 2:7. |

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; John 13:1-30; 1 Cor 11:23ff

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| 3 | <i>Satan entered</i> | see also John 13:2:27 |
| 7 | <i>Feast of Unleavened Bread</i> | see Exodus 12:18-20 |
| 7 | <i>passover lamb</i> | see Exodus 12:1-11; Deuteronomy 16:1-8 |

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

LEARN

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

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

LISTEN

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

LIVE

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
 - a) His nature and character?
 - b) His grace?
 - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 2

Luke 22:14 – 23

Remember Jesus death for you whenever you eat.

Background

The Passover meal was loaded with meaning about God rescuing his people from slavery in Egypt through Moses. Jesus gave it a new dimension.

Although a Passover meal, there is no mention of the lamb being eaten.

Four cups of wine were drunk marking God's rescue of them from Egypt:

1) saving through the plagues, 2) delivering from slavery, 3) redeeming from Egyptians through the Red Sea, 4) becoming a nation at Sinai.

This Passover did not merely repeat the previous celebration, for Jesus calls it a *New Covenant* in v 20. He points (v16) beyond His death to a future fulfilment and He symbolically offers Himself – His own body and blood.

Word List

14	<i>reclined</i>	Passover was always eaten reclining, i.e. leaning on left elbow and eating with right hand.
16	<i>Kingdom of God</i>	The unchallenged rule of God. (Until Jesus came, most Jews thought it would start when the Messiah was crowned in Jerusalem.)
17,20	<i>the cup</i>	The Passover meal included four cups of wine.
20	<i>covenant</i>	a promise/binding agreement between parties
22	<i>Son of Man</i>	OT title Jesus used of himself, stressing his humanity

Bible connections

15	<i>Jesus' sufferings</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 16:21; Luke 18:31-34
16,18	<i>Kingdom of God/ come in Jesus</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 3:2; 12:28; Luke 11:20
20	<i>God made previous Covenants, with:</i>	
	<i>Noah</i>	peace, avoidance of wrath of God <i>see</i> Genesis 9:16
	<i>Abraham</i>	an inheritance and descendants <i>see</i> Genesis 17:2
	<i>Moses</i>	holiness through the Law <i>see</i> Exodus 24:3-8
	<i>David</i>	an everlasting Kingdom <i>see</i> 2 Samuel 7:12
	<i>New Covenant promised</i>	<i>see</i> Exodus 24:8; Isaiah 42:6; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Zechariah 9:11; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:6; 9:15.
21	<i>betrayal</i>	<i>see</i> Psalm 41:9
22	<i>Son of Man</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 8:20; Daniel 7:13

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- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Recognise the privilege of humbly following Jesus.

Background

Not content with ensnaring Judas (22:2), Satan also wants to attack all the other disciples, (to sift *you*, plural, v31). He ‘had asked’ to do so. This reminds us of the dialogue between God and the fallen angel, Satan, in the first two chapters of the Old Testament book of Job, which refers to events happening in a realm invisible to human beings. Jesus tells Peter He has prayed for him in particular and for his faith to survive. Even so, when Peter is challenged (v54-62), he will fail spectacularly, despite this forewarning.

Word list

- 25 *benefactor* ‘Used as a title by some kings of Egypt, (e.g. Ptolemy IX, 147-117BC) and of Syria, (e.g. Antiochus VII, 149-129BC). Also occurs as a laudatory title on 1st Century AD inscriptions commemorating services rendered (e.g. the people of Cos).’ (NBD)
- 31 *Simon* Original name of the disciple Jesus nicknamed, *Peter*.
- Satan* *Lit* ‘Accuser’. The most-evil being, the devil, who tempted Jesus at the start of his ministry, Luke 4:2ff.
- asked* *c.f.* Job 1:6-12: 2:1-7
- sift like wheat* *i.e.* signifying great trials ahead
- you* In v31, ‘you’ is plural, so applies to all the disciples...
- 32 *you* ...while in v32, it is singular, *i.e.* prayer for Simon explicitly
- 37 *transgressors* sinners / breakers of God’s Law Psalms 37:38; 59:5; 119:158

Bible connections

- 24 *the greatest* *see* Luke 9:46//Mark 9:34; 10:43.
- 27 *one who serves* Matthew 20:28//Mark 10:45; John 13:12-17
- 31 *sift* *c.f.* shaken, Amos 9:9
- 32 *I have prayed for you* Romans 8:26-27
- 35 *when I sent you* *see* Matthew 10:9-10// Luke 9:3; 10:4
- 37 *‘numbered with transgressors’* *see* Isaiah 53:12

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Study 4

Luke 22:39 – 46

Be alert to temptation

Background

Matthew and Mark tell us this incident took place at ‘Gethsemane’ – probably a private garden on the lower western slope of the Mount of Olives. It seemed to be a place Jesus had often used *e.g.* 19:29, 21:37. Luke condenses the story and gives us just one example of Jesus’ prayer (Matthew and Mark list three).

Word List

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|--|
| 39 | <i>Mount of Olives</i> | small range of four hills; the highest (830m) overlooks south Jerusalem from the East, across the Kidron valley. |
| 40 | <i>temptation</i> | <i>i.e.</i> temptation to sin, <i>or</i> a time of severe testing/ordeal |
| 42 | <i>this cup</i> | In Old Testament, a ‘cup’ is linked to suffering and God’s wrath. |
| 43 | <i>angel</i> | from Greek word <i>angelos</i> , meaning messenger |
| 44 | <i>agony</i> | Greek <i>agonia</i> - the only time this word occurs in New Testament. |

Bible Connections

- | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------|---|
| | | <i>See also</i> Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-52; John 18:1-14 |
| 42 | ... <i>this cup</i> | <i>see</i> Isaiah 51:17,22; Jeremiah 49:12; Ezekiel 23:33 |
| | <i>doing the Father’s will</i> | <i>see</i> Psalm 40:8, Isaiah 50:5; John 6:38 |
| 42-44 | Jesus was made sin for us. | <i>see</i> 2 Corinthians 5:21 |
| 43 | Angel strengthening Jesus | <i>see</i> Matthew 4:11; Mark 1:13 |

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Study 5

Luke 22:47 – 65

Fix your eyes on Jesus

Background

All four Gospels devote more space to Jesus' trials than they do to his crucifixion. As they do so, they bring out the innocence of Jesus, his silence under questioning, the mocking of people who do not accept his claims, and how he literally took the place of a convicted terrorist.

All four also record how Peter three times denied being a disciple of Jesus, even after Jesus had warned him it would happen. (22:31-34)

Matthew 26:57 tells us the teachers of the law and the elders had already assembled at the house of Caiaphas, the high priest.

While roosters can crow at any time, they do so about four times during the night, with the frequency increasing as dawn approaches. The third one is variously stated as 3 or 4 am. By the way, also at 3am, the Roman guard changed at the end of the third 'watch', signalled by a bugle call named *gallicinium* – which is Latin for cockcrow.

Word list

47	<i>Judas</i>	One of Jesus' twelve particular followers. <i>See</i> note on p9
	<i>...to kiss him</i>	A form of greeting with a hand on each shoulder, especially to a teacher, expressing friendship and esteem
48	<i>Son of Man</i>	The title Jesus often used of himself, stressing His humanity.
50	<i>one of them</i>	John 18:10 tells us it was Peter.
	<i>high priest</i>	Singular, usually refers to president of the Sanhedrin – the Jewish supreme court.
52	<i>chief priests</i>	Plural, <i>i.e.</i> leading men among the priests.
	<i>temple guard</i>	The Temple police.
	<i>elders</i>	Lay members of the Sanhedrin.
53	<i>hour</i>	Particular or opportune time for something <i>cf</i> John 12:27.
54	<i>seized</i>	The verb used does not necessarily imply violence.
59	<i>Galilean</i>	<i>i.e.</i> From the northern area around Sea of Galilee, probably spoke Aramaic with a different accent from Jerusalem

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 26:67-75; Mark 14:65-72;
John 18:16-18, 25-27

Peter's boast: Matthew 26:31-35; Mark 14:29-31; Luke 22:31-34

62 Jesus wept John 11:35

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Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 6

Luke 22:66 – 23:12

Only question Jesus with an open mind!

Background

Jesus' trial was in two main stages. First the Jewish trial in which the chief priests managed to get Jesus condemned under Jewish law. But they did not have the power to sentence anyone to death. So, they had to come up with crimes that would make the Romans execute him.

Luke tells us about Jesus' appearances before (i) the formal Sanhedrin, then (ii) Pilate, (iii) Herod, and finally (iv) Pilate again.

The Jewish trial itself was in 2 or 3 stages: starting during the night, before Annas and Caiaphas (who had some of the Sanhedrin with him) then, after daybreak, a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin.

It was against Jewish law to conduct a trial on a capital charge at night; also to give the verdict at night after a day-time trial. A daytime verdict could not be given until the day after the trial. They shouted down Pilate's 'not guilty' verdict, demanding Jesus be crucified. So both trials were unlawful.

Pilate had provoked the local population previously, which may have cast him in a bad light with his superiors in Rome. He did so in two ways:

- 1) At this time Romans worshipped their emperors, with images of Caesar on their banners. Jewish Law forbade graven images. In deference to the Jews, previous governors removed the image. Pilate didn't. This caused a set to!
- 2) Pilate had commissioned a new water supply for Jerusalem – but paid for by the Temple treasury! The ensuing revolt was harshly put down.

Word List

22:66	<i>council</i>	The Sanhedrin (supreme court of the Jews)
67	<i>Christ</i>	Greek, <i>Christos</i> , means Hebrew, <i>Messiah</i> = Anointed One
69	<i>Son of Man</i>	Ambiguous title Jesus called himself, to stress his humanity; but OT also uses it of the Messiah (Daniel 7:13).
	<i>seated</i>	Posture of rest, having completed his saving work
	<i>right hand</i>	Place of honour
70	<i>the Son of God</i>	Indicating Jesus' special relationship to God (John 5:18)
23:1	<i>whole council</i>	Sanhedrin / council traditionally of 70 (Numbers 10:16)
	<i>Pilate</i>	The Roman governor of Judea, AD 26-36
3	<i>you</i>	Emphatic; it's an incredulous question
5	<i>Galilee</i>	Northern area around Sea of Galilee
7	<i>Herod</i>	Herod Antipas (son of Herod the Great) 4 BC – 39 AD
11	<i>elegant robe</i>	Greek <i>lampros</i> means bright (probably a cast off royal robe)

Bible Connections

see also Matt 26:57-67; 27:1,11-26; Mk 14:53-65, 15:1-15; Jn 18:12-14, 19-23, 28-40
22:69 *Seated at God's right hand* *see* Psalm 110:1; Hebrews 1:3, 12:2
23: 2 *'He opposes paying tax to Caesar'* a lie: *see* Luke 20:25
23: 9 *Jesus led no defence* *see* Isaiah 53:7-8, a prophecy re 'The Servant'

. LOOK

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LISTEN

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
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- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
 - a) His nature and character?
 - b) His grace?
 - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

‘Decision’, Sentence, Capitulation.

Background

‘The chief priests and the elders of the people came to the decision to put Jesus to death.’ (Matthew 27:2) But they themselves could not carry out a death penalty so they had to bring Jesus to Pilate on a charge that would force Pilate to execute *i.e.* ‘subverting our nation’ (23:2).

It was apparently a Passover custom for the Governor to grant an amnesty to one prisoner. According to Matthew 27:15 and John 18:39, Pilate raised the subject, hoping the crowd would opt for Jesus. In Mark 15:6-8, the crowd reminded him to ask them. Luke does not mention the practice. By the 4th century AD, someone had inserted v 17, which is not in Luke’s original text.

In Roman law, a judge could order a light beating to one declared innocent, to ensure they took better care in future.

Word List

18	<i>Barabbas</i>	The name means ‘son of the father’.
22	<i>crime</i> (NIV)	Greek <i>evil</i> (ESV)
	<i>insurrection</i>	He must have been involved in some rebellious act against the Roman occupation.

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 27:15-26; Mark 15:6-15; John 18:39-19:16

25 *innocent condemned, guilty released* *c.f.* 2 Corinthians 5:21

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Be assured: Jesus receives all the repentant

Background

The Romans used crucifixion as an instrument of torture and execution, for the most heinous offences, but rarely for Roman citizens. The cross beam (*patibulum*) was carried to the execution site (always outside the city) by the condemned person. He was preceded by the herald, carrying the ‘*title*’, the written accusation. Once victim and title were nailed to the crossbar, it was hoisted into place and he was left to die of thirst and exhaustion. In muscles depleted of oxygen, fluid and salt, lactic acid causes cramp, starting from extremities, ending with heart and lungs. Horrifically cruel! Death could be hastened by breaking the legs, to stop the victim pushing up to gasp a breath. John 19:33 says this was not needed, as Jesus was already dead by 3pm.

Unlike the centurion or the believing thief, ‘Simon of Cyrene’ is *named*, which implies that those to whom the Gospel was first written would recognise him. Mark, writing his Gospel for the church in Rome, identifies this Simon as ‘the father of Alexander and Rufus’ (Mark 15:21). Paul, in his letter to Rome, greets ‘Rufus, eminent in the Lord, also his mother and mine’ (Romans 16:13)

Word List

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|---|
| 26 | <i>Cyrene</i> | N. African port with a Jewish settlement; now <i>Tripoli</i> . |
| 28 | <i>daughters of Jerusalem</i> | <i>i.e.</i> City dwellers, not from Galilee |
| 31 | <i>when tree is green...dry</i> | perhaps a proverbial saying, <i>meaning</i> , ‘If this is the fate of someone innocent, how much worse will be the fate of the guilty?’ |
| 33 | <i>skull</i> | Latin <i>calvaria</i> which gives us ‘Calvary’. Reason for the name is not known. |
| 34 | <i>divided...lots</i> | An accepted perk for the executioners; <i>see</i> John 19:23. |
| 36 | <i>wine vinegar</i> | <i>i.e.</i> Cheap /sour wine. |
| 39 | <i>save</i> | Greek <i>sozo</i> save or heal (18:42; 19:10). |
| 40 | ‘ <i>Don’t you fear God?</i> ’ | Means, ‘Do you not fear even God?’ |
| 42 | <i>come...kingdom</i> | <i>or</i> come with your kingly power. |
| 43 | <i>Paradise</i> | Persian word for exclusive, walled garden. See Revelation 2:7
An earthly king could bestow a special honour by making someone a ‘companion of his garden.’ |

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 27:33-44; Mark 15:22-32; John 19:17-24

Many phrases in this passage tie in with Psalm 22

29-30	<i>children are a blessing</i>	<i>see</i> Psalm 127:3
30	<i>Death is better than the coming wrath.</i>	<i>see</i> Hosea 10:8
31	<i>when tree is green</i>	<i>see</i> Ezekiel 20:47
34	<i>Father forgive them.</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 5:44; Acts 7:59
35	<i>‘If you are the Son of God...’</i>	<i>see</i> Luke 4:9
43	<i>Paradise</i>	<i>see</i> Revelation 2:7

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- 2) What should I do?

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Study 9

Luke 23:44-49

Look carefully at Jesus' death

Background information

Luke's account of the moment of Jesus' death stresses its effect on those who watched.

'Into your hands I commit my spirit' was a Jewish mother's nightly prayer with her children.

In the Temple there was a 30ft-high curtain separating the 'Most Holy Place' from the rest of the temple. It signified the separation between God's holy presence and sinful mankind (Exodus 26:33). Only the high priest could enter, and only once a year, on the day of atonement (Leviticus 16:2,3,29,30).

Word List

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|--|
| 44 | <i>sixth hour</i> | Noon. The twelve daylight 'hours' varied in length with the seasons, but the sixth hour was always midday. From the 3 rd hour (Mark 15:25) to 9 th was 6 hours on the cross. |
| | <i>darkness</i> | It can't have been a lunar eclipse: Passover is always held at full moon, when the moon is on the opposite side of the globe from the sun. |
| 45 | <i>curtain</i> | See above. |
| 46 | <i>breathed his last</i> | Greek <i>exepneusen</i> , not the normal word for dying, but Dr Luke is precisely correct for death by crucifixion. |
| 47 | <i>centurion</i> | Senior soldier, commanding about 100 men, in charge of execution |
| 48 | <i>beat their breasts</i> | A sign of grief |
| 49 | <i>acquaintances</i> | (ESV) lit 'all the (ones) known to him' – i.e. widest group of disciples? |

Bible Connections

See also Isaiah 52:12 – 53:12; Matt 27:31-61; Mark 15:21-47; John 19:16-42

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|
| 45 | <i>curtain torn in two</i> | <i>c.f.</i> Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38 <i>torn <u>from top to bottom</u>.</i> |
| | <i>Jesus opened the way to God:</i> | <i>see</i> Hebrews 9:7-8; 10:19-22 |
| 46 | <i>'into your hands...'</i> | <i>see</i> Psalm 31:5 |

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The Gospel is for the Jew first, then for any

Background information

Criminals were not normally buried but burnt on the rubbish dump called Gehenna situated outside the south wall of Jerusalem. (This smouldering heap became a by-word for 'hell'.)

Joseph of Arimathea, however, apparently a wealthy man, is emboldened and asks for the body, to give it a proper burial. This was witnessed by the faithful band of women from Galilee who had supported Jesus all of His ministry.

A body that was laid in a family tomb naturally decomposed. After a period of time, the tomb was re-opened and the bones that remained were placed in a box (known as an ossuary) in a room at the back of the tomb. A single-lair tomb was then ready for another body. Bigger tombs could have several lairs. Joseph's tomb, however, was brand new, never before used.

Word list

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 50 | <i>Joseph</i> | Means 'may He add' (Genesis 30:24) |
| | <i>Council</i> | The Sanhedrin (the supreme court of the Jews) |
| | <i>Arimathea</i> | Means 'city of the Jews' |
| | <i>righteous</i> | Greek <i>dikaio</i> s – same word as 'innocent' (47) |
| 53 | <i>Jesus wrapped in linen</i> | On the Day of Atonement, Aaron/the high priest wore 'holy linen garments' to enter Most Holy Place in Temple. (Leviticus 16:4, 32) |
| | <i>in which no-one had yet been laid</i> | Rock tombs <i>could</i> be re-used; this was new. |
| 54 | <i>Preparation Day</i> | <i>i.e.</i> Friday, the day before the Sabbath. It was used for doing work forbidden on Sabbath, <i>eg</i> cooking. |
| | <i>Sabbath</i> | The Jewish holy day, when no work was done (Exodus 20:8ff) sundown (<i>c</i> 6pm) Friday to sundown Saturday |
| 56 | <i>spices, perfumes</i> | Customary to put these between the graveclothes. |

Bible connections

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|---|
| 51 | <i>'waiting for the kingdom...'</i> | <i>see</i> Matthew 27:57; John 19:38 |
| 55 | <i>the women</i> | Luke 8:2-3; 23:49; 24:1, 9-11, 22-23; Acts 1:14 |

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Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Jesus is alive!

Background

In the East, tombs were often caves, carved out of rock. The body was covered in long linen strips like bandages. Normally, spices and ointments were bound in with them. The body was then laid on a shelf in the rock tomb. In a larger tomb, there could be several such shelves, allowing for several different corpses at once, but this was an as yet unused tomb, 23:53. The tomb was closed by a great circular stone, flat like a cartwheel, which ran in a downwards-sloping groove across the opening. It was held in place by gravity and by an added stone wedge.

Word List

- 1 *first day of the week* i.e. Sunday
spices...prepared see 23:55-56
- 4 *wondering* (NIV) *perplexed* (ESV) Experience does not match up with known facts. (Luke 9:7; Acts 2:12; 5:24; 10:17)
two men...lightning Matthew uses the term 'angel' (messenger)
- 5 *bowed down* . . . Sign of respect
- 6 *Galilee* northern area around Sea of Galilee.
- 7 *Son of Man* An ambiguous title Jesus called Himself, seeming to stress His humanity; but OT also uses it of the Messiah (Daniel 7:13)
- 9 *the Eleven* The twelve disciples minus Judas, who had killed himself
- 10 *Mary Magdalene* from Magdala, in Galilee; Jesus had healed her of being possessed by evil spirits. *see* Luke 8:2.
Joanna Wife of Chuza, a manager in Herod's household, also healed by Jesus *see* Luke 8:2
Mary mother of James (and Joses Mark 15:40) & wife of Clopas (John 19:25) . They must have been known to Luke's first audience.
Apostles *lit* 'Sent ones', term used to describe the 12 disciples
- 11 *idle tale* The same words are used by Greek medical writers to describe the babbling of a fevered, insane mind.
- 12 *Peter* Brother of Andrew, one of the disciples.

Bible Connections

- see also* Matthew 28:1-8; Mark 16:1-8; John 20:1-8
- 6 *remember how he told you...* *see* Luke 9:22,24,44; Matt 16:21, 17:23
 - 8 *remembered his words* *see* John 2:22

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On the Road to Emmaus

Background

Only Luke tells us of this incident. He concentrates on the risen Jesus' appearances in the Jerusalem area and does not mention the ones in Galilee. Jesus' followers were looking for someone to redeem Israel. Redemption in the ancient world signified deliverance from slavery upon payment of a price. The day was 'far spent' - too late for the 'stranger' to go beyond the village - but not too late for them to hurry the 7 miles back to Jerusalem with the news! At least, being Passover, if nightfall overtook them, the moon was still full.

Word list

13	<i>Emmaus</i>	Location of this village is not known. Meaning derived from Hebrew word which means 'warm spring'
	<i>about 7 miles</i>	60 <i>stadia</i> in original Greek was eleven km.
18	<i>Cleopas</i>	There is no other mention of him in NT. Name is abbreviated from Gk <i>Cleopatos</i> , 'the glory of the father'.
	<i>visitor</i>	Jerusalem grew to about 2 million people at Passover.
19	<i>Prophet</i>	A man called by God and given a message to proclaim, sometimes predicting what is to come.
27	<i>Moses & all the Prophets</i>	'Moses' meant the Law; phrase sometimes used to mean all of the Old Testament.
	<i>Scriptures</i>	All the Old Testament
30	<i>took bread...</i>	At a Jewish meal, bread was commonly broken at prayer of thanksgiving; normally done by the host.
32	<i>opened the Scriptures</i>	<i>i.e.</i> The hidden meaning was made clear to them.
34	<i>Simon</i>	Simon Peter. Named, because in those days, testimony from female witnesses was not legally admissible.

Bible Connections

		<i>See also</i> John 1:45; 1 Corinthians 15:3-7
21	<i>redemption by his blood</i>	<i>see</i> Rom 3:24; Gal 3:13; Eph 1:7; Heb 9:15
27	<i>in all the Scriptures</i>	The whole OT from Genesis (3:15) to Malachi (3:1) <i>See also e.g.</i> Deuteronomy 19:15; Isaiah 7:14, 9:6, 40:9-11, 53:1-12

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Take a close look at the risen Jesus

Background

The fulfilment of Scripture is a major theme of Luke's Gospel. He sees God as setting out His purpose in Scripture then bringing it to pass. God's plan was not frustrated by the actions of wicked men.

The disciples are beginning to digest the fact of Jesus' resurrection when they get a shock as He suddenly appears in the room with them. (John tells us the door was locked, since the disciples feared being discovered by the Jewish authorities.)

Jesus promises to send them power to be his witnesses. He was referring to The Holy Spirit, who had already featured in Luke's Gospel, always in connection with Jesus Himself; now the Spirit would be given to individual followers. Luke describes this happening in the second chapter of his second volume, The Acts of the Apostles.

Word list

- 36 *Peace be with you.* The normal greeting of the day
- 37 *ghost* *c.f.* Mark 6:49
- 39 *my hands and my feet* *i.e.* His wounds from the crucifixion
- 42 *broiled* Cooked by direct heat
- 50 *Bethany* Village about 3km from Jerusalem beyond Mount of Olives
 The home of Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary.

Bible Connections

See also John 20:19ff for an independent account of the same appearance

- 39 *Touch me and see.* *see also* John 20:27; 1 John 1:1
- 42-43 *ate in their presence* *see also* Acts 10:39-41
- 44 *written in the Psalms* *see* Psalms 2, 16, 22, 69, 72, 110, 118
- 46 *suffer...rise from the dead* *see* Matthew 16:21
- 48 *witnesses* *see* Acts 5:30-32
- 49 *power from on high* Luke 1:39, 67; 2:25; 3:16,22; 4:1,14,18; 10:21
 See also John 14:16,25; 15:26; 16:7-15
- 51 *the ascension of Jesus* *see also* Acts 1:4-11; John 6:62; John 14:2

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Worship Jesus

Background

Luke describes the Ascension more fully in Acts 1:9-11, where he tells us it happened forty days after Easter Day.

The Ascension differs radically from Jesus vanishing from sight of the two people at Emmaus (24:31). There is an air of finality about it. It is the decisive close to one chapter and the beginning of another. Jesus' earthly work is accomplished.

Luke's gospel ends (v53) where it began (1:5) in the temple and on a note of great joy.

It is not a 'tidying up' at the end of the Gospel but it is the culmination of Luke's account with the disciples finally recognising Jesus as God and bowing before Him in worship.

Word list

50	<i>Bethany</i>	Village situated on slopes of the Mount of Olives
52	<i>worshipped</i>	Greek <i>proskyneō</i> , (<i>lit.</i> forward - kiss); used only once elsewhere in Luke's Gospel – ' <i>Anna</i> never left the Temple but <i>worshipped</i> night and day, fasting and praying' (2:37)

Bible connections

50	<i>Bethany</i>	see Mark 11:1; Matthew 26:6
52	<i>led them out</i>	same root as at His crucifixion – ' <i>they led him away</i> ' (Luke 23:26)
52	<i>Jerusalem</i>	<i>Anna spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.</i> (Luke 2:37)
53	<i>worthy of praise.</i>	<i>Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise in the city of our God, His holy mountain.</i> (Psalm 48:1)

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'**

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