

Luke's Gospel

User Notes

Hearing the Word User's manual

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Nigel Barge, December 2011

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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

* 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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Hearing the Word



LOOK – What does it *say*?

The Text

a) What questions does it raise -
b) What surprises you?

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*?

What type of writing is it?
Answer the questions
Summarise the passage



LISTEN – What is the *message*?

What is the **M**ain **P**oint?
Which is the **K**ey **V**erse?



LIVE – What is the *response*?

What does it show *about God* (character, grace*, Jesus**)?

1) from KV / MP
2) from rest of passage

What should be done?

1) From the Key Verse
    a) by original hearers
    b) by me, today.
2) From the rest of the passage

* God's undeserved generosity is evident throughout the Bible, and 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).

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, Answers, MP/KV, Response

Format

LOOK Go verse by verse – invite **short, direct** questions (Who, What, Why, When, Where, hoW!) whether the
& - answer is known or not!, Answer each in turn
Look for other Bible verses that might connect

LEARN Pay attention to anything that puzzles you.

LISTEN - Share views on the Key verse and Main Point?

LIVE - Response?
What does it show about God /His grace/ Jesus?
What should be done?

n.b. Be sure to leave **plenty of time** for the **LIVE** section!

Operation

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 ask for questions whether you know the answer or not)
c) Don't let the 'knowledgeable' dominate. Encourage everyone to think for themselves.
d) Try to include others, especially 'seekers', in your time together.

Growth

The goal is to **share** the word. Discuss soon who you might ask to join you, particularly those out with the church. When you grow to c 5, start plan to divide (see 'Sharing the Word, – Meristems)

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. Exodus is mainly narrative (story), the most common type. To approach narrative correctly we need to keep in mind the following principles.

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 he wrote 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)

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 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, 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, even 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: 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)** the prophecy about Jesus by Simeon (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). This promise was 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
1:32 called Son of the Most High
1:43 Mary mother of 'my Lord'
2:11 Saviour who is Christ the Lord
2:49 in 'His Father's house'
3:22 God says 'you are my Son';
4:34 The Holy one of God
4:41 the Son of God
5:8 the Holy presence
5:13 able to cleanse an individual
5:20 a forgiver of sin
5:32 (righteous one) calling sinners to repentance
5:34 the bridegroom

Information given

For each passage some background information is given. The purpose of this is to try put the reader of today into the same position as a reader of the scripture might have been at the time and place it was written.

This includes:

1) **Background information**

This involves geography, religious practice, customs of that time etc.

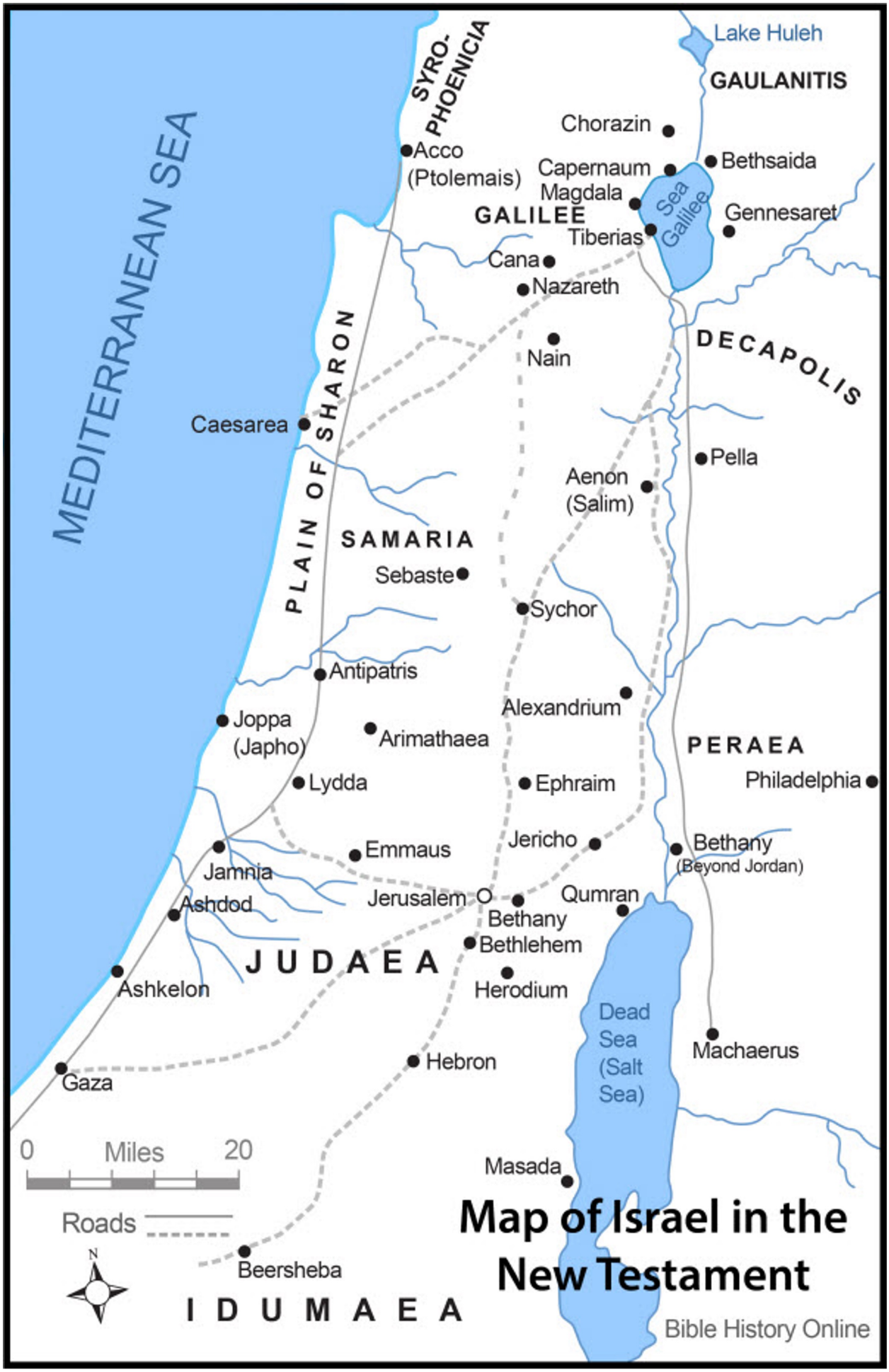
2) **A wordlist**

This includes words of the time, the meaning and significance of which may not be known today.

3) **Bible connections**

These are some relevant cross references in the Bible which may not be familiar to the reader.

By providing this information, we hope to put a person today into a similar position of understanding to those who would have first read it.


MEDITERRANEAN SEA
SYRO-PHOENICIA
Lake Huleh
GAULANITIS
Chorazin
Acco
(Ptolemais)
Capernaum
Bethsaida
Magdala
GALILEE
Sea Galilee
Gennesaret
Tiberias
Cana
Nazareth
Nain
DECAPOLIS
PLAIN OF SHARON
Caesarea
Pella
Aenon
(Salim)
SAMARIA
Sebaste
Sychor
Antipatris
Alexandrium
Joppa
(Japho)
Arimathaea
PERAEA
Philadelphia
Lydda
Ephraim
Jericho
Bethany
(Beyond Jordan)
Emmaus
Jamnia
Jerusalem
Qumran
Ashdod
Bethany
Bethlehem
JUDAEA
Ashkelon
Herodium
Dead Sea (Salt Sea)
Machaerus
Hebron
Gaza
0 Miles 20
Masada
Roads
Map of Israel in the New Testament
Beersheba
IDUMAEA
Bible History Online

Study 1 Luke 1:1-4

The purpose of writing

Background and Word list

Luke carefully sets out how, why, and for whom he is writing this account.

3	*Theophilus*	An individual, or from the Greek 'a lover of God' *see* page iv

Bible connections

2	'The Word'	A title of Jesus (John 1:1)
3	most excellent	Denotes a person of rank (*cf* Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25)
	Theophilus	The recipient of this Gospel, and the follow up letter – the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1:1)
4	know	'Certainty' of faith (Hebrews 11:6)
	taught	Instructed in the faith (*cf* Acts 18:25, 1 Corinthians 14:19)

Study 2 Luke1:5-25

John the Baptist's birth foretold

Background

Luke begins with the announcement of the birth of the 'forerunner', the person foretold by Isaiah (40:3) who would 'prepare the way for the Lord'.

Word List

5	*Herod*	The NT names five people called Herod. This one was 'Herod the Great', born c.73 BC. His father, Antipater (appointed procurator of Judea by Julius Caesar in 47 BC) made his son (this Herod) military prefect of Galilee.
5	*king of the Jews*	Title given to Herod by Roman senate. After three years fighting, he governed Judea for 33 years, 40BC to 4BC. He had killed relatives who might claim his throne.
5	*Zechariah*	A priest, from the Jewish tribe of Levi, or a 'Levite'. His name means 'The Lord has remembered'
5	*priestly division of Abijah*	priests were divided into 24 divisions; each division served in the Temple in Jerusalem for one week, twice a year. (1 Chronicles 24:1-19)
5	*Elizabeth*	Means 'God is my oath'; i.e. God is utterly reliable. Like her husband, she is a Levite.
5	*Aaron*	He was the first priest appointed after the Exodus from Egypt. He and his brother Moses were Levites.
9	*incense*	A costly substance, burned by a priest on the Incense Altar in the Temple for its aromatic odour. He could do only once in his lifetime. It was a symbol of prayers offered 'up' to God for the salvation and peace of Israel.
	lot	A means used to discern God's will.
11	*angel*	Word means 'messenger' see also v 19
17	*Elijah*	An important prophet in the Old Testament
19	*Gabriel*	The Hebrew means 'man of God', 'strength of God'.
22	*not speak*	The Greek word *'kophos'* can mean dumb and deaf.

Bible Connections

9	*burn incense*	*see* Exodus 30:7-8
15	*avoiding wine*	*see* Nazirite vows, Numbers 6:1-4
17	*Elijah*	(1 Kings 17 to 2 Kings 2) *see* Malachi 4:5
	make ready…	*see* Matthew 3:3
	The Lord's coming	*see* Isaiah 40:1-5; 64:1-12
19	*Gabriel*	*see* Daniel 8:16; 9:21
25	*the disgrace / 'curse' of infertility*	*see* Deuteronomy 7:14; Psalm 113:9

Study 3 — Luke 1:26-38

The Birth of Jesus foretold

Background

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy Gabriel appears to Mary, who was betrothed to Joseph, and tells her that while she is a virgin, the Holy Spirit will come upon her and she will be with child. This holy child will be called the Son of God.

Word List

26	*Nazareth*	An obscure village in Lower Galilee, 25 miles west of south end of Sea of Galilee. It was *small* (about four extended families) and *primitive* (some even lived in caves), in a high valley, 370m above sea-level in a mountainous area.
27	*virgin*	A woman who has never had sexual intercourse
	pledged to be married	= betrothed, engaged. This was almost as binding as marriage itself, and lasted for a year.
	David	Second King of Israel
28	*greetings*	Greek literally means, 'Rejoice'. A normal way of addressing someone, still used in country areas of Greece, like us saying 'Hello'. i.e. the word itself does not imply reverence.
31	*Jesus*	Greek form of Hebrew name *Joshua*, meaning, *the Lord saves.*
35	*son of*	At that time, Hebrew understanding was that the foetus was implanted entirely by the male.
38	*servant*	Greek *doule,* literally, slave girl; implies full obedience.

Bible Connections

26	*Nazareth. Can anything good come from there?*	*see* John 1:46
28	*Angel speaks to Joseph after he discovered Mary was pregnant.*	Matthew 1:18ff
30	*Jesus – because he will save his people from their sins*	Matthew 1:2
31	*give birth to a son*	*see* Isaiah 7:14
32,33	*throne of his father David. i.e. Messiah is of David's line.*	*2 Sam 7:12ff; Ps 89:29*
37	*nothing impossible*	*see* Genesis 8:14; Job 42:2; Jeremiah 32:17

Study 4 Luke 1:39-56

Mary visits Elizabeth; Mary's song

Background

Mary travels (over 70 miles south) to the 'hill country of Judea' (exact location is uncertain, roughly west of Jerusalem) to visit Elizabeth who has a wonderful recognition of who Mary's baby is. Mary's song is saturated with Old Testament references. It is often referred to as 'The Magnificat' (from the first word in the Latin translation)

The verbs in v51-55 are aorist tenses in the Greek, *i.e.* they refer to specific occasions in the past or, in a spirit of prophecy, looking forward to what God will do as if it has already happened. (The Old Testament prophets often used this style of speaking.)

Word List 42		*blessed* Happy. In the NT, this has a strong spiritual element.
45	*that what…*	Greek is ambiguous; may be better to translate: *'Blessed is she who has believed, for what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished.'*
49	*Mighty One*	A name for God
	name	One's name stands for the whole person
54	*Israel*	The extra name God gave to Jacob, which came to be used for the nation descended from his twelve sons.
55	*Abraham*	God promised to make him a great nation

Bible Connections

Mary makes *many* references to the Psalms! For example

43 Psalm 110:1
46 Psalm 34:2-3
47 Psalm 18:46; and Isaiah 61:10; Habakkuk 3:18
48 Psalm 137:6 and Luke 11:27-28
49 Psalm 71:19; 111:9
50 Psalm 103:17 and Exodus 20:6
51-52 Psalm 98:1; Psalm 18:27
53 Psalm 107:9
54 Psalm 98:3

Study 5 Luke 1:57-80

John's birth and Zechariah's song

Background

Elizabeth's baby is born, and on the eighth day is circumcised (Genesis 17:12; Leviticus 12:3). It was not customary for relatives to name a child, nor inevitable that he should be named after his father. When Zechariah confirms that the name is 'John', his speech is immediately restored, enabling his outburst of praise to God. His song is often known as 'The Benedictus', from its first word in Latin.

Word List

59	*circumcise*	Remove foreskin from penis surgically
63	*writing tablet*	A board covered with wax, i.e. re-usable
	John	Means 'Yahweh's gift' or 'God is gracious'
67	*prophesied*	Spoke God's revelation
68	*redeemed*	Saved at a cost, rescued at a high price
69	*horn*	Symbol of strength. translated: 'he has raised up a *strong* salvation for us'.
	house of his servant David	i.e. speaking of the Messiah
72	*covenant*	Binding promise between God and his people
73	*oath*	significant part of any covenant; binding promise.
76	*Most High*	Name for God
78	*mercy*	Compassion

Bible Connections

59	*circumcision*	*see* Genesis 17:9-14
67	*praise be to the Lord*	Common way to introduce a thanksgiving *see* Psalm 41:13; 72:18; 106:48
	Old Testament Covenants: especially with Abraham	*see* Genesis 12:2; 15:4-6; 17:17-19.

Study 6 Luke 2:1-7

The birth of Jesus

Background

The Roman Empire periodically took a census (in Judea, to assess taxation; elsewhere, also to find those liable for military service). Actual census documents exist for Egypt, AD 20 – 270, held every 14 years.

Bethlehem was Joseph's 'home' town - God had apportioned the promised land by tribe (Joshua 1). Joseph was of the *tribe* of Judah (who lived in Judea) and within that tribe, of the *family* of David, who came from Bethlehem (1 Sam 16:5-13)

Nazareth to Bethlehem was 80 miles, with mountains in the way. Accommodation for travellers was rather primitive: possibly an open courtyard with stalls opening off it, and a central manger for the animals.

Families were poor; houses were a single room, on two levels; if they could afford animals, these stayed on ground level. To be the right height for e.g. a donkey, a box holding hay would sit on the edge of the family's floor (roughly 80cm higher) - thus in easy reach to lay a baby.

Word List

1	*Caesar Augustus*	Roman emperor, 27BC to 14AD
4	*Nazareth*	Town in Galilee, about 25 miles west of the Sea of Galilee
	Bethlehem	Small town in Judea, six miles south of Jerusalem, 80 miles south of Nazareth. Birth place of King David.
7	*manger*	Greek word for manger comes from a verb 'to feed on, eat, taste'. The noun can mean manger *or* crib, suggesting use as a baby's cot was, or became, common.
	inn	The same word is used in Luke 22:11 for a room in a *house*; New International Version there translates it, 'guest room', which in that case was 'a large upper room, furnished' 22:12.

Bible Connections

4	*Bethlehem*	Birthplace of King David	1 Samuel 16:1
		Promised Ruler to come from it	Micah 5:2; Matt 2:5

Study 7 — Luke 2:8-20

The shepherds and the angels

Background

It is very likely that sheep in the fields near Bethlehem were intended for the Temple sacrifices in Jerusalem, only six miles to the North.

Shepherds were despised by the orthodox 'good' people of the day because their duties meant they were unable to keep all the details of the ceremonial law. Yet their work was essential to keep up the supply of lambs, 'spotless, without blemish', fit for the Temple.

Word List

9	*angel*	Greek '*angelos*' means 'messenger'
	glory of the Lord	Visible sense of the presence of God
11	*town of David*	Bethlehem
	Saviour	One who will save *see* John 3:17
	Christ	Greek '*Christos'* means 'the anointed one', as does '*Messiah'*, from a Hebrew word.
	Lord	God (Greek translation of Yahweh)
13	*host*	Army
14	*peace*	Peace between God and mankind
15	*let's go to*	Greek for this conveys a sense of urgency

Bible Connections

11	*Saviour's birthplace*	*see* Micah 5:2
11	*Christ*	Anointing was used to set apart not only kings, but also prophets and priests. 1 Kings 19:15,16; Leviticus 8:12

Study 8 — Luke 2:21-40

Jesus presented in the Temple

Background

Regulations were given for circumcising baby boys on the 8th. day, and the timing and sacrifice necessary for their parents to redeem (buy back) their first born son, that had been claimed by the Lord (Exodus 13:2,12), on the 40th day.

Word List

21	*circumcise*	removal of foreskin. OT token of God's grace: he chooses and marks men as his own. Sign that the covenant between God and Israel applied to this man
	Jesus	Greek for Hebrew name *Joshua*, means 'God saves'
22	*purification*	ritual for a woman's cleansing after childbirth
	Law of Moses	the first five books of the OT
	Jerusalem	capital and site of the Temple
	Law of the Lord	a term similar to 'the Law of Moses'
25	*Simeon*	a common name; no other NT reference to *this* one
	righteous	ie behaved well towards other people
	devout	ie careful about religious duties
	consolation of Israel	the coming of the Messiah
26	*Christ*	Greek for Hebrew *Messiah* means 'the Lord's anointed'
27	*custom of the law*	the five shekels paid to redeem the first-born, *see* Numbers 18:8,14-16
32	*Gentiles*	i.e. non-Jews
	Israel	the Jews
36	*Anna*	Greek form of Hebrew name Hannah, means grace

Bible Connections

21	*circumcision*	*see* Genesis 17:1-14
	born under the law to redeem those under the law	*See* Galatians 4:4-7
22	*purification, 40 days for boy, 80 for girl*	*see* Leviticus 12:1-4
23	*consecration of firstborn males*	*see* Exodus 13:2,12; Numbers 18:15
30	*God's salvation*	*see* Isaiah 40:5; 52:10
32	*light for the Gentiles*	*see* Isaiah 42:6; 49:6
34	*fall and rise of many in Israel*	*see* Isaiah 8:14,15; 1 Corinthians 1:23-24

Study 9 Luke 2:41-52

The boy Jesus at the Temple

Background

We know nothing of Jesus' boyhood apart from this one incident, which Luke alone relates. All Jewish adult males were expected to attend the Temple in Jerusalem for three annual festivals, at Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles (Exodus 23:14-17). Most made the effort once a year. At other times, they worshipped every week in their local synagogue.

Jewish boys could become a 'son of the law' (*Bar Mitzvah) and* a full member of the synagogue when they were thirteen. They then assumed all the responsibilities to keep the covenant implied in their circumcision.

In later practice, women and children travelled ahead; the men and older boys took up the rear. If this were the case here, Jesus would have gone up with Mary; whereas on the way home, she would have assumed he was now with Joseph. Each thought he was with the other parent. Confusion!

Word List

41 *Feast of the Passover* remembering how God brought Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised land (Exodus 12).

43 *the boy* greek *pais* (note progression from *brephos* v16 meaning 'baby', to *paidion* v 40 meaning 'little boy', then *pais v 43*).

46 *temple courts* Temple precincts, used as area for teaching.

46 *questions* asking questions was the normal teaching method.

Bible Connections

47 *amazed at Jesus' understanding* *see also* Matt 7:28; 13:54; 22:33; Mark 1:22; 6:2; 11:18; Luke 4:32; John 7:46

50 *not understanding Jesus* *see also* Mark 9:32 9:45; 18:34; John 12:16

51 *Nazareth – a backwater* *see* John 1:46 *c.f.* Phil 2:8

52 *Jesus growing in wisdom and stature* *see* 2:40 *c.f.* 1 Samuel 2:26 Proverbs 3:4

John the Baptist prepares the way

Background

All the Gospels tell us that John the Baptist's ministry prepared the way for that of Jesus and that it was characterised by a call to repentance.

Before John the Baptist, baptism was already being given to Gentile women wanting to become Jews; Gentile *men*, of course, were circumcised. John's innovation was to invite men and women who were *already Jews* to be baptised, as a sign they were repenting of their sins (Luke 3:1-20). He also distinguished it from the Baptism which would come after him.

Luke carefully dates the beginning of John's ministry and all that followed, setting it firmly in secular history. Scholars estimate the date as AD 27-29. Later, Christians dated events from the supposed date of the birth of Jesus, Before Christ (BC) or after (AD means *anno domini* which means 'in the year of the Lord').

Word List

1	*Tiberias Caesar*	Roman emperor, AD 14 -37
	Pontius Pilate	Roman governor of Judea AD 26-36
	Herod	Herod Antipas, (son of Herod the Great) 4 BC – AD 39
	Iturea and Traconitis	area NE of Sea of Galilee; Philip ruled here from 4 BC to 33/34 AD
	Abilene	Area north of the regions mentioned above
	Lysanias	Nothing else is known about him.
2	*Annas*	High Priest in Jerusalem AD 6-15. Deposed by Romans, but still had power and influence
	Caiaphas	High Priest AD 18-36, son-in-law of Annas
	John, son of Zechariah	*see* Luke 1:5-25, 57-80
3	*baptism*	Symbolic cleansing, already in use at this time for Gentile women who wanted to convert to Judaism
8	*stones/children*	There is a play on words here: in Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke, the words sound similar.
	Abraham	The 'father' of the Jewish nation. *See* God's promise to him in Genesis 15
15	*the Christ*	The Messiah, the anointed one
16	*sandals…untie*	A slave's job

Study 11 Luke 3:21-37

Baptism & genealogy of Jesus

Background

Jesus begins His public ministry by being baptised by John. He did not have any sin of his own to repent of – elsewhere the NT says He was without sin (Hebrews 4:15, 7:26-28) – so John was reluctant (Matthew 3:13-15). Scholars think Jesus was identifying Himself with the sinners He came to save. Just as he would later *die* in place of sinners, His baptism by John implied He also *repented* on behalf of those who would later trust in Him.

In the Old Testament and first century AD, Jews carefully preserved their genealogical tables. Luke here gives us Jesus' family tree through His mother, *Mary,* who was descended from King David. He wants us to know that Jesus is the Son of God.

Word List

23 *about thirty years old* — age at which Levites began their ministry (Numbers 4:47)

Bible Connections

21 *Jesus was baptised too.* — *See* Matthew 3:13-15

22 *God confirms Jesus' Sonship,* - combining Psalm 2:7 about a victorious Messiah, and Isaiah 42:1, about a servant who suffers. *See also* the Transfiguration Luke 9:28-36; Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8

Jesus asks the Father to glorify His name. — John 12:23-33; 17:1

23 *genealogical table* — compare this with Matthew 1:2-16 which shows that *Joseph*, the legal father of Jesus, is also descended from David. Matthew, writing mainly for Jewish readers, starts with Abraham, the founder of the Jewish race. Luke, with his Gentile readership, goes right back to Adam.

A Bible with cross references will show where to get more detail about the famous names in this list, but don't get bogged down! *See* 1 Timothy 1:3-5

Study 12 Luke 4:1-13

The temptation of Jesus

Background

Before he began his public ministry, Jesus spent time alone in the desert, reflecting on God's word in the Old Testament, and the words he had heard at his baptism (Luke 3:22). God had quoted two strands of OT prophecy, about a victorious king, and a servant who suffered.

What sort of Messiah was he to be? How was he to use his powers?
For personal convenience?
For establishing a mighty empire on earth?
For working spectacular, if pointless, miracles?
He rejected all these as temptations of the devil.

Word List

3	*devil*	Greek *diabalos*, in hebrew *satan* meaning adversary or slanderer

Bible Connections

2	*Adam was tempted to eat.*	*see* Genesis 3:1ff
	Jesus was tempted like us.	*see* Hebrews 4:15; 2:14-18
3	*God's ways is not ours .*	*see* Isaiah 55:8
	the foolishness of God (crucifixion), wisdom of man	1 Cor 1:22ff
3,9	'*If* you *are* the Son of God'	*see* Luke 3:22
4,8,12	*Jesus' use of Scripture*	*see* Deuteronomy 8:3; 6:13; 6:16
5	*The kingdom of evil*	*see* John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Ephesians 2:1-13; 6:11-12; 1 John 5:19
	Christ's kingdom	*see* John 18:36; Matt 26:51-55; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5
	by-product of seeking Christ's kingdom first:	Matthew 6:33
	satan in religious guise	*see* 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
11	*satan misuses Scripture.*	*see* Psalm 91:11-12
13	*the devil left him until an 'opportune' time.*	*see* Luke 8:12; 10:18; 11:18; 13:16; 22:3,31; Mark 8:32-33

Study 13 Luke 4:14-30

Jesus rejected at Nazareth

Background information

From 4:14 to 9:50, Luke gives us an account of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Much of this information is also given in Matthew and Mark, but Luke alone describes in detail what happened in Jesus' home town of Nazareth, soon after Jesus was baptised and tempted (cf v.23).

Thanks to Luke, we hear Jesus explaining from Isaiah's prophecy the kind of ministry he would exercise, as someone who came to bring salvation not only to the Jews but to all who believe in him.

Word List

14	*Galilee*	North Palestine; well-watered by streams from mountains further north; much of it fertile; dense and prosperous settlement; exported olive oil, cereals and fish.
16	*Nazareth*	a town in Galilee, about 25 miles west of Sea of Galilee.
	Sabbath	seventh day of the week; Jewish day of rest, running from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday.
	Synagogue	jewish place of meeting for worship in a locality. From a greek verb meaning *to gather together.*
19	*Year of the Lord's favour*	ie the era of salvation.
23	*Capernaum*	village on NW shores of Sea of Galilee; the first village west of where the R Jordan entered the lake.
25	*Elijah*	notable OT Prophet *see* 1 Kings 17-19; 2 Kings 1-2.
26	*Zarephath*	a small Phoenician town in Sidon, ie not part of Israel.
26	*Elisha*	Elijah's successor *see* 2 Kings 2:1 – 9:13.
27	*Naaman*	commander of Syrian army during the reign of Ben-hadad *see* 2 Kings 5.

Bible Connections

18f *Elijah & the widow of Zarephath*, 1 Kings 17:7-24 Isaiah 61:1-2; 58:6 *(c.f.* 18-19 with the questions in Study 5…What sort of Messiah had Jesus to be?)

Study 14 Luke 4:31-37

Jesus drives out an evil spirit

Background information

From 4:14 to 9:50, Luke gives us an account of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Much of this information is also given in Matthew and Mark. Luke begins his account of Jesus' mission with some miracles of healing and a preaching tour.

The expression "a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon" is nowhere explained. The Bible says little about demon possession before or after the incarnation, but much during Jesus' ministry. In Scripture then this phenomenon is part of the conflict between Jesus, who came to destroy the works of the devil (I John 3:8), and evil.

Word List

31	*Galilee*	North Palestine; bordered on East by River Jordan and the Sea of Galilee
31	*Capernaum*	20 miles from Nazareth, down on NW shore of Sea of Galilee, near where river Jordan runs into it
	Sabbath	Seventh day, Jewish day of rest, running from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday
	Synagogue	Jewish place of meeting for worship in a locality- from a Greek verb meaning *to gather together*
33	*demon/evil spirit*	*evil* means *unclean* in the Greek
34	*Holy One of God*	Unusual title, stresses thought of consecration to God's service
35	*be quiet*	Literally "be muzzled"

Bible connections

	see also	Mark 1:21-28
32,36	*amazed at Jesus' teaching*	*see* Matthew 7:28-29
33-34	*demon shouting 'I know who you are'*	*see* James 2:19
34,37	*Holy One of God*	*see* Mark 1:24; John 6:69
35	*Jesus' work is to destroy the works of the devil.*	*see* 1 John 3:8

Study 15 — Luke 4:38-44

Jesus heals many

Background and

Jesus continues with miracles of healing and teaching the people. This is Luke's first mention of 'the kingdom of God', which was to become the favourite theme in Jesus' teaching. Preaching this good news is Jesus' priority.

Word List

38	*Simon*	one of the 12 disciples *see* 5:1-11; 6:13
	high fever	a medical term
41	*Son of God*	expression of Jesus' unique relationship to Yahweh
	Christ	means Messiah - literally 'Anointed One'
43	*Kingdom of God*	same as the kingdom of heaven *c.f.* Matthew 5:3; Luke 6:20
44	*Judea*	or 'the land of the Jews'

Bible Connections

	see also	Matthew 8:14-17; Mark 1:29-38
42	*daybreak…solitary place*	*see also* Mark 1:35; 6:46; Matthew 14:13,23; Luke 6:12; 9:28

Study 16 Luke 5:1-11

Calling of the first disciples

Background

The crowds are still following Jesus and he continues to teach them. Fishing on the Sea of Galilee was usually done at night in small boats using large drag-nets. During the day the fishermen would clean and repair their nets.

Word List

1	*Lake of Gennesaret*	also known as Sea of Galilee or Sea of Tiberias. 13 miles long by 7 miles wide and 680 feet below sea level. Gennesaret is also the name for a fertile plain on the west side of the lake.
	Gennesaret	word derived from 'harp' (because the lake is roughly harp-shaped) or 'garden of riches'.
3	*sat down*	the customary position for teaching
5	*Master*	term denoting anyone in authority
8	*Lord*	*'kurios'* was a term Luke used of God (4:18)
10	*don't be afraid*	'stop being fearful' rather than 'don't get scared'
	catch men	The greek verb *zogreo* means 'take alive'; it is usually used of taking a person prisoner in war so sparing their life. It can also can mean 'to restore to life and strength, revive'
		The tense shows a habitual practice is in mind.

Bible Connections

	see also	Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; John 1:40-42
1	*Word of God*	*see* Mark 4:14; Hebrews 4:12
5	*fishing all night and catching nothing- see also* John 21:3	
8	*'Go away…I am a sinful man.'*	*c.f.* Abraham, Job, Isaiah, Israel. Genesis 18:27; Job 42:6; Isaiah 6:5; Exodus 20:19

Study 17 — Luke 5:12-16

Healing a leper

Background

In Biblical times 'leprosy' was the name given to a number of skin diseases, some curable and some not. In its worst form it was disfiguring and fatal. The only defence against it was quarantine. Sufferers were forbidden to approach other people and had to call out 'Unclean' to prevent accidental contact. *see* Leviticus 13:45-46 The psychological effects were as serious as the physical.

Word List

12	*leprosy*	skin disease
	covered with	an advance state of the disease
	make me clean	heal me (Leprosy was a 'dirty' disease. It defiled.)
14	*go…priest*	The priest acted as a kind of health inspector.
	sacrifices	offered after priest was satisfied. *see* Leviticus 14:2-32
	Moses commanded	a way of referring to the Law
	testimony to them	proof that he had been healed

Bible Connections

	see also	Matthew 8:2-4 and Mark 1:40-44
13	*Jesus' compassion*	Matthew 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; James 5:11
14	*'Don't tell anyone.'*	also said to demoniacs in 4:35,41
	leprosy in Old Testament	*see* Leviticus 14:2-32
16	*Jesus praying*	*see* Matthew 3:21; Mark 1:35; Mark 6:46; Luke 4:42; 6:12; 9:18,28; 11:1

Study18 Luke 5:17-26

Jesus heals a paralytic

Background and

This healing miracle is recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Jesus had quite a reputation by now; the Pharisees were coming from a distance, (Judea and Jerusalem) not just locally, to hear him. Jesus works the miracle and shows that he has authority on earth to forgive sins.

Word List

17	*Pharisees*	unofficial religious leaders of the day with great emphasis on keeping the law and their many human additions to it, allegedly to explain it.
	Teachers of Law (scribes)	those who studied, taught, interpreted the Law of Moses, the first five books of the Bible
	Judea	south of the country
	Jerusalem	capital city, with the Temple
18	*some men*	Mark tells us there were four.
19	*roof*	Palestinian houses then had flat roofs, often with external staircases.
20	*sins*	wrongdoing, violating God's law
21	*blasphemy*	disrespect for God, insulting his honour
24	*Son of Man*	a term Jesus often used of himself (c.f. Dan 7:13f)

Bible Connections

see also Matthew 9:2-8 and Mark 2:3-12

20	*faith of friends*	*see* Luke 7:9f; 1 Cor 7:14
21	*Who is this…?*	*see* also 7:49; 8:25; 9:9,18,20; 19:3
	Contemporary mistake that sickness is the result of sin	John 9:1ff
21	W*ho forgives sins?*	*see* Isaiah 43:25
24	*Son of man*	*see* Daniel 7:13ff

Study 19 — Luke 5:27-32

The calling of Levi

Background

The Romans taxed people by farming out the taxing rights to the highest bidder. Many charged more tax than was strictly necessary and pocketed the extra, so they were often rich men. Everyone heartily disliked tax collectors as collaborators with the Romans and as extortioners. Levi probably collected toll or customs duties rather than poll tax or the like.

Word List

27	*Levi*	also known as Matthew see Matthew 9:9 *(Matthew* means: 'Gift of God /Yahweh')
	tax collector	not allowed in local synagogue or Temple; classed with robbers and murderers.
	Levites	Tribe set apart to serve in the Temple (Numbers 18:21ff; Deuteronomy 18:1-4)
30	*'sinners'*	In the Pharisee's eyes, anyone who was ceremonially unclean was a sinner.
32	*repentance*	The Greek verb *metanoeo* used to mean: to perceive afterwards; to change one's purpose or conviction; to regret; to repent. But NT usage is heavily influenced by the OT: not just feeling sorry, but a total change of the motivation and direction of one's life; to turn round, to convert. The related noun *metanoia* is not just a change of mind on reflection, repentance, but conversion.

Bible Connections

see also Matthew 9:9-13 and Mark 2:14-17

27	*'Follow me'*	*see* Matthew 4:19
29	*banquet*	for Luke's dinner scenes, *see also* 7:36; 9:12ff; 10:38ff; 11:37; 14:1; 24:30,41ff
32	*repentance*	Luke develops this theme more fully than Matthew or Mark. *see* Luke 3:3,8; 10:13; 11:32; 13:3,5; 15:7,10; 16:30; 17:3,4; 24:47 *see also* John 3:17

Study 20 Luke 5:33-39

Jesus questioned about fasting

Background

The Law prescribed only one fast - on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29-34) but fasting was practised by John the Baptist's followers and by the followers of the Pharisees. Jesus' disciples were too cheerful for the Pharisees!

Word List

33	*pray*	It probably refers to set prayers at fixed hours
34	*taken from them*	(Greek = *aparthe*) suggests violent separation. It refers to Jesus' death on the cross?
36	*parable*	story or short, pithy saying, making a point in a round-about way
37	*wineskins*	usually goatskin, flesh and bones removed and skin left intact. When new, the supple, elastic skin could expand as the new wine fermented, but as it aged it became dry, hard and rigid; everyone knew it could still be re-used to hold water, but new wine would burst it.
39	*old is better*	or 'the old is good' i.e. unwilling to consider the new

Bible Connections

see also Matthew 9:14-17 and Mark 2:18-22

35 *taken from them* *see* Luke 9:22

Study 21 Luke 6:1-11

Jesus and the Sabbath

Background information

Opposition to Jesus was mounting up and the Pharisees and the scribes were coming out into the open with their objections. The Pharisees listed thousands of acts prohibited on the Sabbath, in thirty nine categories, of which four were reaping, winnowing, threshing and preparing a meal. Jesus confronted them head on and showed that he is 'Lord of the Sabbath'.

Word List

1	*Sabbath*	seventh day of Jewish week; a holy day, day of rest Hebrew root word 'sabat' means 'to cease'. After 6 'days' of creation, God 'rested' on the 7th 'day'.
2	*Pharisees*	unofficial religious leaders of the day who put great emphasis on keeping the law, plus their thousands of petty additions to it, allegedly to explain it
3	*David*	the second King of Israel
4	*consecrated bread*	also known as *the shewbread,* or the '*bread of the Presence*'; made in a special way; on display for one week in the Temple, then eaten, but only by priests.
5	*Son of Man*	a title Jesus used of himself (c.f. Daniel 7:13f)
6	*synagogue*	Jewish place of worship
7	*shrivelled*	Some form of muscular atrophy

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 12:1-14; Mark 2:23-3:6

1	*Sabbath*	Fourth commandment tells us to keep it holy and a day of rest Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15
	picking corn	Wayfarers allowed to do this to satisfy their hunger, but only by hand: no sickle. Deuteronomy 23:25
2	*unlawful*	Pharisees defined reaping, threshing, winnowing and preparing food as work, so forbidden.
4	*consecrated*	only to be eaten by priests (Leviticus 24:5-9) but given to David and his men when they were on the run from King Saul 1 Samuel 21:3-6.

7 *healing on Sabbath:* Pharisees only allowed it if there was danger to life.

Study 22 Luke 6:12-16

Part of the 'motley crew'?!

Background information and Word List

In the preceding chapter Luke has shown how the Jewish religious leaders and many ordinary people rejected Jesus and his claim to be the Messiah (literally, the promised one 'anointed' by God as King). After a night spent alone in prayer, Jesus chose twelve particular followers.

13	*disciples*	learners, followers
	apostles	people with a special charge and authority from Jesus Greek *apostolos* = one who is sent out
14	*Peter*	Greek *Petros*, the extra name Jesus gave to Simon, *Petra* means *rock*, so *petros* is a *piece* of rock, i.e. *a stone*
15	*Bartholomew*	literally, *son of* Tholomai *cf* our surnames *Mac*Donald, Donald*son*. This friend of Philip (Matt 10:3; Mk 3:13; Acts 1:13) is called *Nathanael*, a given name, in John 1:45; 21:2.
	Matthew	sometimes called Levi (see 5:27; Matthew 10:9)
16	*Zealot*	Zealots were a radical group violently opposed to Rome. This description, however, may mean only that he was characterised by fiery zeal.
	Judas, son of James	also known as Thaddaeus (see Mark 3:18)
	Iscariot	possibly 'man of Kerioth' (a town in Judea) (see John 6:71; 13:26). He was the only disciple not from Galilee - (Jesus, from Nazareth, was of the tribe of Judah (2:4; Mt.1:3,6).

Bible Connections

12	*prayer*	Luke often draws attention to importance of prayer for Jesus *e.g.* 5:16; 9:18,28; 11:1. *see also* Mark 1:35; 6:46 Matthew 14:23
13	*choosing the Twelve*	*see also* Matthew 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19
14	*Simon Peter*	When Jesus first met him (John 1:42), he named him *Kepha,* Aramaic for 'rock, stone'. That appears in Greek letters as *Cephas,* used in 1 Cor 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5 and Gal 2:9. Translated into Greek, *Cephas* is *Petros,* not previously used as a man's name. It is written in English as *Peter.*

Study 23 Luke 6:17-26

God's 'upside down' Kingdom

Background information

6:20-49 is sometimes known as the 'Sermon on the Plain' (or level place) as distinct from 'the Sermon on the Mount' in Matthew 5 - 7. Some think one sermon lies behind both accounts, but there are many differences between them: Luke's is just 29 verses long, where Matthew takes three chapters. Or maybe Jesus said similar things more than once.

The 'blessings and woes' make a mockery of the world's values. They praise what the world despises and reject what the world admires.

Word List

17	*level place*	perhaps somewhere on the mountain side
	Judea	area about 80 miles S of Galilee, around Jerusalem
	Jerusalem	capital of Judea, site of the Temple
	Tyre and Sidon	coastal area 40 - 60 miles N.W of Galilee. Historic sea ports founded c 2,500 yrs before this event.
18	*evil*	Greek word is 'unclean'. *see* 4:33
20-22	*blessed*	happy / fulfilled
22	*Son of Man*	A title Jesus uses of himself - stresses his humanity yet hints at his being divine. (cf Daniel 7:13,14)
23-26	*woe*	'alas' or 'how terrible'; expression of regret and compassion, not a threat.
23	*prophets*	people called by God to speak on his behalf, here referring to the Old Testament prophets

Bible Connections

18	*curing those with evil spirits*	*see also* 4:33
19	*power coming from Him*	*see* 5:17; Matthew 9:20; (c.f. Mark 6:5)
20-22	*beatitudes*	*see* Matthew 5:3-12
21	*hunger*	*see* Isaiah 55:1-2
	weep…laugh	*see* Isaiah 61:2-3
22	*exclude/insult*	*see* John 9:22; 15:18-21; 16:2; Isaiah 51:7
24	*rich/comfort*	*see* James 5:1-6; Luke 16:25
25	*well fed/hungry*	*see* Isaiah 65:13
	laugh/weep	*see* Proverbs 14:13
26	*false prophets*	*see* Matthew 7:15

Study 24 Luke 6:27-35

Be gracious like God

Background information

The heart of this sermon is the need for love. In New Testament Greek there are four nouns translated in English as 'love'. Jesus is speaking of *agape** love, not *eros* (romantic love), *storge** (natural affection) or *philia* (friendship). He means love for even the unlovely i.e. love that arises because the 'lover' is loving, and chooses to love.

v31 is often referred to as the 'Golden Rule'. It appears in some earlier cultures, but only in the negative form *(Do **not** do to others what you do **not** want them to do to you)*. Jesus seems to be the first to have given it in the positive form. *See also* Matthew 7:12.

Word List

29	*Cloak / tunic*	outer / inner garment
30	*give*	continuous tense i.e. habitual attitude
32	'*sinners'*	The unreligious (like tax collectors) were not allowed into the Temple; so could not offer sacrifices.
35	*without expecting to get anything back*	A better translation of the Greek is 'never despairing'.
	sons	our relationship with God the Father *see* Rom 8:14-16
	Most High	a title for God *see* e.g. Daniel 7:18. It stresses the <u>absolute</u> nature of His authority c.f. Genesis 14:18-22.
	Ungrateful	lit, ***achari**stous* means 'without grace' (*charis* meaning grace).

Bible Connections

27	*love*	Examples of *agape* love: Jesus praying for those who nailed Him to the cross: Luke 23:34 *c.f.* The first Christian martyr, Stephen: Acts 7:60. God's love for sinners: Romans 5:6,8,10 1 Corinthians 13; 1 John 4:19
	do good	Jesus 'went about doing good' himself *see* Acts 10:38
27-35		*see also* Matthew 5:38-48 and Romans 12:9-21
30	*give . . .*	*see also* Luke 6:38; 21:1-4; Deuteronomy 15:7-8, 10-11;
32	*credit*	Charis (greek) - grace (lit. means 'what to you grace is there')

**pronounced* <u>a</u>-ga-pay, <u>stor</u>-gay

Study 25 Luke 6:36-42

Do as God has done to you!

Background information

In this section Jesus applies some of what he has said already.

It is possible to group v 36 with the preceding verses, as the New International Version does; but if seen as an introduction to vv 37-42, it sets the tone of leadership under God, as disciples express to others the mercy they themselves receive from God.

Our approach to judging our fellows is a consequence of the way God has treated us – ungrateful and wicked as we are (35).

A forgiving spirit is a sign of being forgiven!

Word List

38	*lap*	Greek *kolpon* refers to the fold in outer garment made as it hung over the girdle; it was used as a kind of pocket.
40	*above his teacher*	At this period, a learner's only source of information was his teacher.

Bible Connections

36	*mercy*	*see* Romans 12:1; 2 Corinthians 1:3
37	*do not judge*	*see also* Matthew 7:1-5; 18:21 -35, James 2:13; but compare Galatians 2:11-14, 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 9-13; 1 John 4:1-3
38	*give*	Elijah and the widow 1 Kings 17:1-16

Study 26 Luke 6:43-45

Watch your mouth!

Background information

Jesus uses another metaphor, one from the countryside, familiar to all his listeners. A man's deeds show what is in his heart.

Word List

45	*the heart*	Jews reckoned the *heart* as the place of thinking and the *gut* as the place of emotions. Modern English would say we *think* with our *minds* and *feel* with our *heart*.
	evil	A strong word associated with the devil, to include evil spirits (Luke 7:21) and the evil one (Matt.5:37)

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 7:16,18,20

43	*good and bad fruit*	*see* Matthew 12:33-37; Mark 7:20-23
	fruit of the Spirit	Galatians 5:19-24
45	*the reason for what we say*	*see* Proverbs 4:23-24; James 1:14-15,26
	the tongue	James 3:3-12

Study 27 Luke 6:46-49

Put your mouth where your money is!

Background information

Jesus tells the disciples a story to illustrate the importance of acting on the teaching they have received.

In the Middle East, rain is sporadic. For much of the time, the intense sun leaves the ground baked hard. So when rain does come, much of it quickly runs off, combining into streams that can suddenly turn into torrents powerful enough to wash away everything before them.

(The route such water carves out for itself is called a *wadi,* which looks like a river bed, but is dried up most of the time since it does not come from a spring. E.g. look up images of 'Wadi Qelt' online, to see a steep gorge made by a wadi's erosive power. The road going East from Jerusalem to Jericho (Luke 10:30) runs beside it.)

Word List

46 *Lord*	To call someone 'Lord' is to admit we owe allegiance to that person.

Bible Connections

46-49	Parallel in Matthew 7:24-27
46 *honouring God*	*see also* Malachi 1:6
47 *hearing and doing*	*see also* James 1:22-25; Luke 11:28
48 *founded on rock*	*see* 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; Ephesians 2:19-22; Isaiah 28:16; 1 Peter 2:4-8

Study 28 — Luke 7:1-10

The faith of the Centurion

Background information

Capernaum, a village on the NW shores of the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 4:13), was three miles West of where the river Jordan fed into the Lake from the north. It was near a political border, so that a customs post (Mark 2:14) and military detachment were necessary (Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10).

The area (*Tell Hum*) has been very extensively excavated and gives a vivid picture of what life was like in the 1st century AD. The ruins of a 5th century church stand round the ruins of what may have been Peter's house. To protect it, a visitor centre has been built on stilts above the site, in effect a huge roof.

Word List

1	*Capernaum*	village on NW shore of Sea of Galilee a place with a strong Roman presence and garrison
	Servant	(gk *doulos* – a slave) – a 'living tool' over which the owner had the right of life or death.
2	*centurion*	Roman army captain (original meaning 'in charge of 100 soldiers' but over time the number varied).
	valued	(gk *entimos*) honoured, esteemed (not monetary)
3	*elders*	local Jewish religious leaders
5	*love our nation*	Romans were generally anti-Semitic – Jews a 'filthy race'. Judaism a 'barbarous superstition'. Jews 'hated mankind'. Annually 'sacrificed a stranger to their God'. (W Barclay)
6	*under my roof*	Jews were forbidden to enter gentile houses (Acts 10:26)
7	'Servant'	(gk *pais* – a child)

Bible connections

*See also Matthew 8:5-13*1

3	*'deserves (greek agios = Holy)*	consecrated Luke 2:23
6	*'deserves' (greek axious = equal value)*	in keeping with Luke 3:8
7	*the effect of God's word*	*see* Psalm 107:20; John 1:1-3
9	*those who don't see and yet believe*	*see* John 20:29
	faith out-with Israel	Luke 4:25-27;10:33-37; 17:16; 24:45-47

Jesus raises a widow's son

Background information

In Nain, Jesus meets a funeral procession. The body, wrapped in a shroud, would have been lying on a bier being carried. The mother would have been walking ahead of it. When Jesus touched the bier he became ritually unclean, according to the ceremonial laws; but where human need was concerned, he never worried about ceremonial trifles.

Word List

11	*Nain*	probably the modern Nein, 6 miles SE of Nazareth and a day's journey from Capernaum It is situated on north side of Hill of Moreh. {A couple of miles away, on the south side was Shunem where Elisha raised another boy (2 Kings 4:32-37)}
13	*the Lord*	This is the first time Luke himself uses this term for Jesus.
14	*coffin*	better translated 'bier", perhaps a long, wicker-work basket

Bible connections

Other raising-from-the-dead events in Scripture: *see* 1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:32-37; Matthew 9:18-24; Mark 5:21-24; John 11:1-44

16 *God has come to help his people.* *see also* Ruth 1:6; 1 Samuel 2:21

Study 30 Luke 7:18-35

Jesus and John the Baptist

Background information

At this point, John the Baptist was in prison (Luke 3:20 Matthew 11:2). Presumably he was expecting Jesus to do something dramatic. When nothing seemed to be happening, he sent men to Jesus to find out why – and possibly to provoke some action? Jesus gave them a surprising answer.

Word List

22	*leprosy*	the Greek word covers various skin diseases
24	*prophet*	a person who spoke God's word
24	*fine clothes*	lit 'soft' clothes (c.f. Matthew 3:4 – camel hair!)

Bible connections

See also Matthew 11:2-19

18	*John was Jesus' cousin – aware of the His promise.*	Luke 1:35-66
19	*One coming 'will baptise with the Holy Spirit.....'*	Luke 3:16ff
22	*fulfilment of prophecy*	*see* Isaiah 29:18-19; 35:5-6; 61:1-2; Luke 4:18
24	*John's desert ministry*	*see* Luke 3:1-20; Matthew 3:1-12; Mark 1:4-7; John 1:15-28
27	*John's ministry foretold*	*see* Malachi 3:1
28	*tax collectors believing*	*see* Luke 3:12; Matthew 21:32; Mark 1:5
33	*eating locust and wild honey*	Mark 1:3

Study 31 — Luke 7:36-50

Jesus anointed by a sinful woman

Background information and Word List

In the Middle East, houses of well-to-do people were built round an open courtyard. Weather permitting, meals were eaten there, at tables in three sides of a square, with diners round the outside. It was the custom that when a Rabbi (Jewish teacher) was present at a meal, all kinds of people were free to come in and listen to the pearls of wisdom which fell from his mouth.

When a guest entered such a house three things were done: the host gave them a kiss of peace, a servant poured cold water over dusty feet, and a drop of oil or perfume was placed on the guest's head.

Matthew (26:6-13), Mark (14:3-9) and John (12:1-8) also record a woman anointing Jesus. There are good reasons for thinking those three refer to one, common incident but Luke to another: eg Luke's story occurs early in Jesus' ministry while the others refer to the last week of his life; besides, the dialogue is about money for the poor etc, not forgiveness as in Luke.

36	*Pharisees*	Jewish leaders who interpreted the law very rigourously; their emphasis was ethical rather than theological; known as the 'separated ones'.
	reclined	The tables were low, so diners reclined on cushions, leaning on left hand or elbow with feet stretched out behind.
37	*alabaster jar*	Gk *alabastros* means a globular container for perfumes; it had no handle; the long neck was broken off when the contents were needed.
	perfume	ie perfumed oil, rare and expensive
38	*her hair*	Jewish ladies did not unbind their hair in public.
41	*denarii*	one denarius was a day's pay for a labourer.
46	*oil*	olive oil, plentiful and cheap
50	*go in peace*	The Greek is literally 'go *into* peace'.

Bible connections

44	*water for guest's feet*	*c.f.* Genesis 18:4; Judges 19:21
	kiss of welcome	*c.f.* Genesis 29:13; 45:15
	anointing guest's head	*c.f.* Psalm 23:5; 141:5
47	*saving faith*	*see* Ephesians 2:8-9

Study 32 Luke 8:1-15

The parable of the Sower

Background information

Jesus is on a preaching tour, speaking in the open air, perhaps because of increasing hostility on the part of the synagogue leaders. Some women are accompanying him and his twelve disciples. Rabbis refused to teach women and generally assigned them a very inferior place, but Jesus freely admitted them into fellowship and depended on their service.

The Palestinian farmer sowed first and ploughed afterwards (as he still does) and then the nature of the soil was seen as the ground sprouted.

Word List

2	*Magdalene*	someone who came from Magdala (meaning 'The Tower'), a village near Capernaum.
	seven demons	Seven is the divine Jewish number meaning 'complete'.
	Susanna	means 'lily'
3	*Chuza*	A non-Jew, Nabatean, descendent of Abraham's half-brother, Ishmael (Gen 25:13)
		Manager – right-hand man, chancellor of his exchequer
4	*parable*	short descriptive story, usually designed to show a single truth or answer a single question
10	*secrets*	*musteria,* spiritual truths only God can reveal
15	*Noble and good*	both words similar meaning - 'good' and 'productive'
	Heart	the place of Jewish mind / thinking

Bible connections

		see also Matthew 13:2; Mark 4:1-20
1	*the Twelve*	the twelve men Jesus appointed 'apostles' (6:13)- 'to be with Him, to preach and to cast out demons'. (Mark 3:14f)
2	*Susanna* means *Lily*	Song of Solomon 2:16;4:5;5:13;6:2,3; 7:2 possibly the 'woman of the city' (7:36ff)??
3	*Mary Magdalene*	watched crucifixion (Mt 27:55f; Mk15:40; John 19:25) saw where he was laid, (Mt 27:61; Mk15:47); Lk 23:55 went to anoint Jesus body (Mt 28:1; Mk 16:1; Lk24:10)
10	*...seeing, they may not see…*	*see* Isaiah 6:9-13
11	*the Word of God*	*see* Hebrews 4:12
	God gives the growth	1 Corinthians 3:7

Study 33 Luke 8:16-18

A lamp on a stand

Background information

Here we have three short sayings of Jesus, each with its own warning for life. The third one (v18) seems to link up directly with the foregoing parable of the sower and also that of the pounds (19:26): it is important to hear rightly.

Word List

16	*lamp*	a round pottery bowl to hold the oil; with what looked like a spout where the wick projected.
17	*into the open*	meaning 'seen' (lit 'into the light' cf vs 16)
18a	*consider carefully*	Greek '*blepete'* - same word as 'watch out' (21:8)
	Listen	Greek '*akouete'* - same word as 'hear' (8:8)

Bible connections

see also Matthew 5:15; Mark 4:21-22; Luke 12:2

16	*light*	A light on its stand	Luke 11:33
		Jesus is the Light of the world	John 9:5
		The Word of God is a lamp	Psalm 119:105
17	*nothing concealed*	REPEATED in	Luke 12:2
18	'*whoever'* (same words in Greek –"*os gar an*")		Luke 9:26
	'what he thinks he has will be taken away'	REPEATED in	Luke19:26

Study 34 Luke 8:19-21

Jesus' mother and brothers

Background information and word list

The most natural understanding of the phrase, 'Jesus' brothers', is that they were children of Joseph and Mary, younger than Jesus. Mark (6:3) gives the names of four, and also mentions sisters.

21 lit - 'hearing and doing the Word of God'

Bible connections

see also Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:21,31-35

19 *now (Greek 'de')* – a link word *c.f.* 7:36; 8:40 (In the other Gospels this event is set <u>before</u> the parable of the sower.)

Jesus' care for his mother *see* John 19:26

Jesus' brothers see Matthew 13:55

Jesus' brother James *see* 1 Corinthians 15:7; Galatians 1:19; Acts 12:17

19,20,21 *Jesus' 'mother and brothers'* – mentioned three times

This is the last mention of Jesus' mother / family in Luke's Gospel.

21 *putting God's word into practice see* Luke 6:47; 11:28; John 14:21

Study 35 Luke 8:22-25

Jesus calms the storm

Background information

Jesus continues his preaching tour in the Galilee region, with large crowds gathering and many people being healed.

The Sea of Galilee (also Sea of Chinnereth or Tiberias) is an inland lake, roughly oval, up to 7½ miles E-W and 14 miles N-S. It is subject to sudden storms because of its location. It lies in a rift valley, 696 feet below sea level. From the north, part of the River Jordan brings melted snow from Mts Hermon and Lebanon (both over 9,200 feet); the rest of the R Jordan drains it south, falling another 600 feet in 70 miles to the Dead Sea (1,296 feet below sea level). Other nearby mountains are Tabor (1929) and Gilboa (1640) to South West and Meron (3,963) to North West. Gorges from at least five different angles channel cold air from these and other heights. These conflicting winds can whip up the sea unpredictably.

'Other side' (22) region of the Gerasenes (26) is in the south; Capernaum is in the North. Presumably this is a trip from North to South

Word List

22	*disciples*	the Twelve *see* 5:12-16
	lake	ie Sea of Galilee
24	*Master*	This Greek word *epistates* is used in the New Testament only by Luke. (23 times) It has overtones of super-intendent or overseer. It literally means one who 'stands over', so acknowledges authority / invites the one addressed to command

Bible connections

See also Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:36-41; John 6:16-21

24	*rebuked*	*see* Psalm 106:9
	calm	*see* Psalm 107:29; Jonah 1:15

Study 36 Luke 8:26-39

Jesus heals a demon-possessed man

Background information

The exact location of this incident is uncertain. It happened on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. Possible towns, Gerasa or Gadara, are not at the lakeside. We assume the town in question had control of a tract of land bordering the lake. There were some Jews but the population was mostly Gentile.

Word List

26	*Gerasenes*	or *Gadarenes* or *Gergesenes* See note above
	Galilee	region on the west side of Sea of Galilee
27	*demon*	spiritual being, hostile to God and people
	tombs	thought to be the haunt of demons
29	*evil spirit*	as above
30	*legion*	i.e. a large number (a Roman legion had 6,000 soldiers)
31	*abyss*	Greek *abyssos* = bottomless pit i.e. the place where evil spirits were confined
35	*sitting at Jesus' feet*	position of pupil listening to teacher

Bible connections

		see also Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20
31	*abyss*	*see also* only mention outside book of Revelation Revelation 9:1,2,11; 20:1-3
35	*sitting at Jesus' feet*	*see also* 10:39
36	*demon-possessed*	*see also* Matthew 4:23
37	*asked Jesus to leave them*	*c.f.* Acts 16:39

Study 37 Luke 8:40-56

Jesus, a dead girl and a sick woman

Background information

Matthew, Mark and Luke all have the healing of the woman with the haemorrhage, and all place it in the middle of the Jairus story. The two stories together form a powerful illustration of the way Jesus healed and exercised authority, even over death.

Word List

41	*Jairus*	means 'whom God enlightens'
	a ruler of the synagogue	i.e. high status, in charge of all that happened
42b	*crushed*	same Greek verb is translated 'choked' in 8:14
43	*bleeding*	Suffering from polymenorrhea. Any contact with blood, even your own, made a person ceremonially unclean, so unable to join in worship at the synagogue or Temple. *see* Leviticus 12:1-8, 15:19,25
44	*edge of his cloak*	ie tassel on edge of square garment - over left shoulder and hanging down the back, to remind of God's commands *see* Numbers 15:38-40
48	*daughter*	the only time Jesus uses this term; i.e. He speaks to her tenderly.
	faith	lit. 'believing' c.f. same word vs 50 'just believe'

Bible connections

See also Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:22-43

46	*power going out from Jesus*	*see also* 5:17; 6:19
48	*faith has healed…go in peace*	In Greek these words are identical to 7:50.
	Go in peace.	*see also* Acts 15:33; Philippians 4:7,9
52	*not dead but asleep'*	*c.f.* John 11:11-14. The NT uses the term *fallen asleep* for believers who have died, Acts 7:60. 1 Thessalonians 4:13, but never of Jesus; it always says, 'Christ *died*'. Romans 5:6,8; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 1 Peter 1:3

Study 38 Luke 9:1-9

Jesus sends out the twelve

Background information

There were signs that Jesus' ministry in Galilee would not last much longer and it was important both to spread the message of the kingdom and to give the disciples experience of doing so.

Normally, when a Rabbi entered Palestine after being in a Gentile country he would shake off the last particles of heathen dust from his feet.

Word List

3	*the Twelve*	the twelve men Jesus had chosen as His particular followers and travel companions *see* 6:12-16
	bag	*Greek para,* knapsack, traveller's bag
6	*preaching the gospel*	lit 'good-news-ing!'
7	*Herod the Tetrarch*	Herod Antipas, 4 BC–AD 39, son of Herod the Great
	John	John the Baptist
8	*Elijah*	Significant Old Testament prophet, 1 Kings 17-19, 21:28, 2 Kings 1 - 2:12

Bible connections

	for 9:3-5	*see* Matthew 10: 9-15; Mark 6:8-11
	for 9:7-9	*see* Matthew 14:1, 2; Mark 6:14-16
7	*John the Baptist*	Put to death (Matt 14:3-11)
8	*Elijah*	Prophet expected to reappear before the Messiah came *see* Malachi 4:5
9	*Herod tried to see Jesus.*	He finally succeeded, but Jesus said nothing. *see* 23:8-10

Study 39 Luke 9:10-17

Jesus feeds five thousand

Background information

Apart from the Resurrection, this is the only miracle which appears in all four gospels.

Bethsaida was not under Herod's jurisdiction.

Word List

10	*Bethsaida*	a town on the north shores of Galilee near the Jordan, not far from Capernaum The name means 'house of fishes'.
13	*you*	The *you* is emphatic.
	loaves	*see* John 6:9 barley loaves, the food of the poor
14	*5,000 men*	women and children, if any, were not counted

Bible connections

see also Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; John 6:1-15

God will supply:

The lamb for sacrifice,	Genesis 22:8
Manna for the people of Israel,	Exodus 16
All our needs,	Philippians 4:18,19

Study 40 Luke 9:18-27

Peter confesses Christ

Background information

Matthew and Mark locate this incident near Caesarea Philippi, near the foot of Mount Hermon. This was heathen territory, beyond Herod's jurisdiction.

Word List

19	*John the Baptist*	the forerunner of Jesus *see* 3:1-22
	Elijah	a significant OT prophet *see* Study 2 above.
20	*you*	the *you* is emphatic
	The Christ	Greek for "Anointed one" (*Messiah* is a transliteration of Hebrew word with similar meaning)
21	*strictly warned*	*i.e.* "gave them strict orders"
22	*Son of Man*	Old Testament term used seventy times in book of Ezekiel. Jesus often so describes Himself, underlining his humanity.
	rejected	a technical term to denote rejection after careful legal scrutiny, to see if a candidate for office was qualified
	elders, chief priests and teachers of the law	*i.e.* a single group in the Sanhedrin, the highest tribunal of the Jews
23	*cross*	When Jesus was 11, there was a rebellion against Rome, led by Judas the Galilean. The royal armoury at Sepphoris (4m from Nazareth) was raided. The rebellion was quashed, Sepphoris burned and 2000 rebels were crucified along the road.

Bible connections

	see also	Matthew 16:13-16, 21-28; Mark 8:27-29,31 - 9:1
22	*Jesus predicts his death and resurrection.*	*also* 18:31; (His death described 23:26-46) *see* 24:25-27
23	*Take up your cross.*	*see* 14:27 *c.f.* 23:26
26	*Jesus coming again*	*see* Matthew 16:27; John 14:1-3
27	*…will not taste death…*	*see* John 21:20-23. Or did Jesus mean they 'saw the kingdom' at the Transfiguration, see study 41; or at Pentecost, Acts 2:1ff.

Study 41 — Luke 9:28-36

Jesus is transfigured

Background information

Tradition places this incident at Mt Tabor but this is almost certainly wrong: it is too far away from Caesarea Philippi, and was populated, so did not offer the solitude Jesus wanted. Mount Hermon is possible, but not certain.

Word List

30	*Moses*	the great lawgiver
	Elijah	the great representative of all the Old Testament prophets
31	*departure*	literally *exodus* meaning Jesus' death *cf* 2 Peter 1:15
33	*shelter*	*i.e.* a temporary leafy shelter /tent /tabernacle. People made them annually, to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. *see* Leviticus 23:33-43
35	*from the cloud*	*i.e.* out of the cloud

Bible connections

See also Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; and Peter's account 2 Peter 1:16-18

28 *Jesus at prayer* — Luke3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 10:21f; 11:1; 22:41ff; 23:46

31 *the final exodus* — *see* John 19:17; Romans 3:25; Hebrews 13:12-14

32 *disciples sleepy* — *c.f.* Mathew 26:39-41

34 *cloud, the presence of God* — *see* Exodus 40:34ff; Rev 14:14-16

35 *This is my Son …* — *see* Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 42:1, Hebrews 1:1-5

c.f. voice at Jesus' baptism, Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11

36 *Forbidden to tell others of experience till resurrection* (Matthew 17:9; Mark 9:9)

Study 42 Luke 9:37-45

Healing boy with an evil spirit

Background

Jesus, Peter, James and John came down from the amazing experience on the mountain top, where Jesus' glory was revealed, to find a very different experience on the plain.

Word List

40	*disciples*	the other nine apostles, not the crowd mentioned in v37
42	*threw*	The same word is used of a boxer dealing a knock-out blow or a wrestler throwing an opponent.
44	*you*	This is emphatic, *ie* here speaking explicitly to the 12 disciples, not the general public.

Bible connections

		see also Matthew17:14-18; Mark 9:14-29
41	*unbelieving and perverse generation*	*c.f.* Numbers 14:27
42	*rebuked unclean spirit*	*see also* 4:35,39,41; 8:24
44	*they did not understand*	Mark 8: 30-35; 9: 30-32;

Study 43 Luke 9:46-50

Who will be the greatest?

Background

The disciples' pride may be part of the reason for their inability to understand. They were thinking of themselves, Jesus was thinking of others.

Word List

46 *argument* and 47 *thoughts*	are translations of a single Greek word Luke uses twice *(Greek - dialogismos)*. It can mean 'thought' or 'reasoning'.
47 '*aware of their thinking*'	a Jewish expression *c.f.* He was 'wise to them'.
49 *said*	*lit.* answered *i.e.* John responded to Jesus' words.

Bible connections

	see also Matthew 18:1-5; Mark 9:33-40
46 *which should be greatest*	*see also* Luke 22:24-27; Mark 10:35-45
47 *knowing their thoughts*	*see* Matthew 9:4; 12:25; Luke 6:8; 11:17; John 1:47-49; 2:25
47,48 *Jesus' attitude to children*	*c.f.* 10:21
Jesus' humility	*see* Philippians 2:1-11

Study 44 Luke 9:51-56

Samaritan opposition

Background information

With the words, 'Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem', Luke begins a new section of his narrative. Where everything up to 9:50 concentrates on Jesus *birth* and *deeds*, 9:51 – 19:44 is mainly, though not exclusively, about his *teaching*.

After the northern Kingdom of Israel (representing 10 tribes) was overrun by Assyria (721 BC), the province of Samaria was populated by foreigners worshipping idols (2 Kings 17:24-41).

The Samaritans, who lived in the area between Judea and Galilee, were thereafter often feuding with the Jews (see John 4:9). The latter did not regard them as pure-blooded enough to be genuine Jews. The Samaritans wanted people to worship God at *their* own holy place, Mount Gerizim (close to the village of Sychar, John 4) although the Temple there had been destroyed over a century before; so they did not help travellers who were evidently on their way to worship at the *Jewish* Temple in Jerusalem.

Word List

51 resolutely Single minded devotion (c.f. Acts 2:42)

Bible connections

51	*Jesus en route to Jerusalem see*	13:22,33; 17:11; 18:31; 19:11,28
	taken up into heaven see also	24:50; Mark 16:19
54	*fire from heaven*	*c.f.* 2 Kings 1:10,12

Samaritan worship sites Deuteronomy 11:29, Joshua 8:33; John 4:5,20
(Archaeologists are not clear whether the older Shechem and the newer Sychar were the same place, or just near each other.)

Study 45 Luke 9:57-62

The cost of following Jesus

Background

Some well-intentioned people tell Jesus that they want to follow him; but they have not realised the demands that this will make on them.

Word List

58 *Son of Man* a slightly ambiguous title Jesus used of himself. It could have meant, 'mere human'. In the Old Testament it is used most by Ezekiel, speaking of himself (c 30 times).

It could also have been a quotation of Daniel 7:13, where the prophet has a vision of 'one like a son of man' who was given 'all authority, glory and sovereign power; all people, nations, and men of every language worshipped him…'

By using this term of himself, Jesus was unobtrusively claiming to be the Messiah for whom the Jews were waiting.

59 *Bury my father* Jews normally regarded this as taking precedence over study of the Law, Temple service, killing of Passover sacrifice, observance of circumcision.

62 *plough and looks back* When walking behind the plough, as they did in Jesus' day, the only way to plough a straight furrow is to keep aiming for a fixed point *ahead*. (Tractor drivers today, *towing* their ploughs, can use GPS!)

Bible connections

see also Matt 8:18-22

61 *say goodbye to my family* *c.f. 1* Kings 19:19-21

Jesus sends out the seventy two

Background information and Word List

Some manuscripts say Jesus sent out *seventy* while others say *seventy-two*. Luke's Gospel is for the Gentiles. The number may be symbolic of the nations of the world – the number given in Genesis 10.

1	*Lord*	Luke himself first uses this term for Jesus in 7:13.
4	*purse*	Greek *bellantion* is a moneybag; in NT used only by Luke.
	bag	Greek *pera* means traveller's bag.
	do not greet	Eastern salutations can be elaborate and time consuming.
11	*shake off dust*	Rabbi's did this when returning from gentile lands.
12	*that day*	Day of Judgment
	Sodom	Its destruction made it a proverbial saying for judgment of God on sinful men.
13	*woe*	an expression of deep regret, not a call for vengeance
	Korazin	towns on north side of Sea of Galilee. We know nothing
	Bethsaida	of Jesus' ministry in K and very little about B. The disciple Philip was from Bethsaida. *see* John 1:44 &12:21
	Tyre and Sidon	great commercial cities on Mediterranean coast, 40 and 55 miles NW of Capernaum; they had been the heart of the Phoenician empire. *see* Isaiah 23; Ezekiel 26-28
15	*Capernaum*	Much of Jesus' ministry happened here. *see* Matthew 4:13
19	*authority*	The word indicates having the right to exercise power.

Bible connections no other reference to this incident of sending *seventy:* Matt 10:1; Mark 6:7; Luke 9:1 - sending out *the twelve*

7	*worker deserves wages*	*see* 1 Timothy 5:18
	God will supply…	*see* Philippians 4:18,19
8	*eat what is set before you*	*see* 1 Corinthians 10:27
12	*Day of Judgment*	*see* 21:34; Matthew 7:22; 2 Thessalonians 1:10
	destruction of Sodom	*see* Genesis 19:13,24f
	Christian confidence	*e.g.* 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:9,10; 2 Timothy 1:12,18; 4:8
13	*Tyre and Sidon*	Destruction prophesied, Ezekiel ch 26-28
19	*tread upon scorpions*	*c.f.* Psalm 91:13; Mark 16:18
20	*names written in heaven*	*c.f.* Ex 32:32; Dan 12:1; Heb 12:23; Rev 3:5

Study 47 Luke 10:25-37

The parable of the good Samaritan

Background information and word list

This parable is found only in Luke.

The story is set on an actual road from Jerusalem to Jericho; it follows a steep descent called Wadi Qelt (see Internet for images). Through a rocky, desolate landscape providing ample cover for ambushes, the road drops some 3,500 feet in just 17 miles. People usually travelled it in groups, never alone.

In the 5th Century, Jerome described it as 'the Red, or bloody way'.

Jews and Samaritans were implacable enemies– *see notes for Study 3*.

25	*expert in the law*	*i.e.* expert in Pentateuch, the first 5 books of OT.
26	*Law*	*i.e.* The Pentateuch.
32	*Levite*	An aide to the priests, administered in the Temple.
33	*Compassion*	Lit. greek 'the bowels' – seat of emotions, moved (*c.f.* 7:13).
34	*oil and wine*	Olive oil would have eased the pain; wine had antiseptic effect.
35	*two silver coins*	Lit. 2 *denarii*. One denarius was a typical day's wage for a farm labourer. (*c.f.* Matt 20:9).
	elders, chief priests and teachers of the law	*i.e.* A single group in the Sanhedrin, the highest tribunal of the Jews

Bible connections

27	*summary of the Law*	*see* Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18 *c.f.* Mark 12:30; Matthew 22:37
31-32	*Touching a dead person made one ceremonially impure and barred one from worship.*	*see* Numbers 19:11; Leviticus 21:1ff
32	*Levite, mentioned three times in New Testament.*	*see* John 1:19; Luke 10:31-32; Acts 4:36

Study 48 Luke 10:38-42

At the home of Martha and Mary

Background

This incident is told only by Luke, who seems to have put it out of chronological sequence. From John 11:1 we know Martha and her sister Mary lived in Bethany; it was barely two miles East of Jerusalem (John 11:18) separated from the city by the top of the Mount of Olives. Jesus had a particular affection for them and their brother Lazarus *see* John 11. Their house may have been a base for Jesus during the last week of his earthly life.

Word List

39	*Martha*	*From* Aramaic language, similar to Hebrew. Means Lady or mistress of the house
	Mary	*lit.* Mariam, the Greek form of the Hebrew Miriam. From Egyptian – 'beloved' (?)
39	*at the Lord's feet*	Attitude of pupil or listener *c.f.* Luke 8:35
	what he said	*lit.* His word (cf John 1:1)
40	*preparations .... work*	***n.b.*** The same word *lit.* serving (greek *diakonos*)
42	*has chosen the better*	*lit.* Has chosen the good portion

Bible connections

38	*a village*	Namely Bethany,	Matthew 21:17; John 11:1; 12:1
40	*service of - the needs of others*		Luke 8:3; Acts 19:22
	- of Jesus		Philippians 1:1
	- by Jesus		Romans 14:8
41	*worried about many things*		*c.f.* Matthew 6:15-34
42	*one thing needed*		*c.f.* Psalm 27:4

Study 49 Luke 11:1-13

Jesus' teaching on prayer

Background information

Religious leaders of the day often taught their followers how to pray.

Jesus often refers to the 'Kingdom' of God; here he includes the word in the prayer, leaving us to fill in the meaning from the rest of his teaching.*

Jesus uses humour in this parable. Households baked their own bread every morning. Hospitality was a sacred duty even if a visitor arrived unexpectedly. The house would have had a single room, with the whole family sleeping on the floor in the raised half of the room, and the animals on the lower part near the entrance; so the man getting up would disturb *everyone*.
The NT rarely mentions The Son, Father and Holy Spirit together (*c.f.* 3:22)

Word List

1	*John*	John the Baptist who had prepared the way for Jesus
2	*Father*	Aramaic *Abba,* the address of an infant to a parent
	hallowed	'Treated as holy', 'reverenced'
	name	Summed up a person's nature and character
	kingdom	Where everyone acknowledges God as King and thinks and behaves in character with Him
3	*give*	verb tense is 'continuous present', *keep giving*
	daily	Greek *epiousios* is a very rare word.
4	*sins against us*	Greek 'is indebted to us'.
8	*boldness*	Lit. 'importunity' = unreasonable urgency
9	*ask, seek, knock*	The verbs are all continuous tense, *keeps asking* etc.

Bible connections *Parallel passages* Matthew 6:9-13; 7:7-11

1	*John the Baptist*	*see* Luke 3:1-23
2	*Abba, Father*	*see* Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6
	name	*see* Psalm 9:10
	**kingdom*	In Luke: 1:34; 4:5-8; 7:28; 8:9; 9:2,11,20,35,60,62; 10:9,11; 11:17-20; 12:32; 22:16; 23:42; John 18:36
	**parables of the kingdom in Luke*	13:18-30; 14:15-24; 17:20-37; 18:15-17, 24-30; 19:11-27
	God's will	Luke 22:42
3	*daily bread*	*c.f.* manna, Exodus 6:11-21
4	*lead us not into temptation*	*c.f.* 1 Cor 6:18; 10:14; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22
13	*Holy Spirit - Enables us to call God 'Father'*	Romans 8:15
	- Convicts of sin, righteousness, judgement	John 16:8

Study 50 Luke 11:14-28

Jesus and Beelzebub

Background

Demon possession seems to be a phenomenon especially associated with the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus.; it was an outburst of evil opposition to his work. The Gospel accounts distinguish between demon possession and illness, whether mental or physical (*eg* Matthew 4:24).

There were many exorcists in Jesus' time in Palestine.

Beelzebub: It seems that the Jews took the name of a heathen god and understood it in terms of a similar-sounding Hebrew word meaning 'lord of dung'. They applied the term to Satan, satirically.

Word List

14	*demon*	Spiritual being hostile to God
15	*Beelzebub*	Greek *Beelzebul*, another name for Satan /the devil, a malignant reality, always hostile to God, but inferior.
18	*Satan*	*see* v15
19	*your followers*	The Greek is strongly emphatic
24	*comes out*	*i.e.* 'Leaves' not expelled
26	*seven*	The divine / perfect/ complete number (*c.f.* Gen 2:2)
	live there	*i.e.* 'Settle down', 'live permanently'
28	*rather*	The Greek word used emphasises the greater relevance of what follows.

Bible connections

Parallel Passages Matthew 12:22, 24-29, 43-45; Mark 3:23-27

20	finger of God	*c.f.* Exodus 8:19

Study 51 Luke 11:29-36

The sign of Jonah/The Lamp of the Body

Background information

Luke gives eighty four verses of Jesus' teaching 11:29 – 12:59. There is little to show the time or the place, though some of the sections are linked to one another. Some parts are unique to Luke; others appear in Matthew but in a different context.

Jesus is the person *anointed* by God (Christ (Greek)/Messiah-(Hebrew)). Prophets, priests and especially kings were anointed. Luke quotes two sayings in which Jesus claimed to be greater than Jonah and greater than Solomon. Both men were well known in Jesus' day, one as a prophet who spoke God's word, the other as a King who ruled God's people in a time of peace and prosperity.

Artificial light came from oil lamps. Unlike glass mixing bowls in our kitchens today, containers then were made of clay or basketry. Putting a lamp on *top* of one increased the spread of light. Putting it *under* one was laughable!

Word List

29	*Jonah*	Old Testament prophet – *see* book by the same name
30	*Ninevites*	Inhabitants of Nineveh to whom Jonah was sent
31	*Queen of the South*	Queen of Sheba (modern day Yemen)
	will arise	Lit. 'will be raised' (cf Luke 24:7; 1Cor 15:52)
	from the ends of the earth	*i.e.* a long and difficult journey
	Solomon	a King of Israel with a reputation for wisdom
31,32	*one greater*	Greek is neuter *i.e. something greater,* standing for all that is involved in the coming of Jesus and the kingdom
34	*good*	Greek is *singular i.e.* single-mindedly fixed on the good
	bad	The Greek word can mean *evil.*

Bible connections

Parallel passages: Matthew 6:22-23; 12:38-42; Mark 8:12; John 2:18-22

29-32	*sign of Jonah*	*see* Jonah chapter 3
31	*Queen of Sheba & Solomon*	*see* 1 Kings 10:1-13; 2 Chron 9:1-12
	Solomon's wisdom	1 Kings 3:1-28; 4:29-34
35,36	*light*	Matthew 5:16; 2 Corinthians 4:6

Study 52 Luke 11:37-54

Six woes

Background

Before eating anything, scrupulous Jews had water poured over their hands to remove the defilement contracted by their contact with a sinful world.

Pharisees were a strict religious party. They made a mockery of the Law by adding burdensome minutiae like tithing stalks of herbs.

To come into contact with a grave incurred ceremonial defilement. Some graves were unmarked, so the unwary could easily walk over one and be unwittingly defiled, *i.e.* 'unclean' for seven days, therefore debarred from worship.

The 'experts in the law' or scribes were also experts at evasion, finding a way around the details of the law when it suited them. Their attention had moved from the spirit of obeying God to merely keeping the letter of the Law.

Word List

37	*eat with him*	Greek *aristao* 'to have lunch'
41	*literally: 'Nevertheless the things being within give alms and behold all things clean to you'*	
	alms	A pittance, the offering *for* (or maybe *of*?) the poor
42	*woe*	Like '*alas',* an expression of regret, not vindictiveness
43	*most important seat*	*i.e.* At the front, facing the congregation
	greetings in the market place	*i.e.* Being shown deference
45	*expert in the law*	Those who gave themselves over to study of Old Testament Law
50	*Abel*	Son of Adam and Eve, killed by his brother Cain (Genesis 4:8)
	Zechariah	prophet; his death was last death of a prophet mentioned in the Old Testament (2 Chronicles 24:21f)
54	*catch him*	Greek *thereusai* is used of hunting wild beasts!

Bible connections

42	*tithing commanded in the Law*	*see* Leviticus 27:30; Deuteronomy 14:22
44	*touching a grave*	*see* Numbers 19:16

Study 53 Luke 12:1-12

Warnings and encouragements

Background information and
A very large crowd has gathered but Jesus speaks first to his disciples.

Word List

1	*many thousands*	*lit 'Murias'* = 'ten thousands'
3	*inner rooms*	Store rooms, well protected from prying eyes or ears
4	*hell*	Greek *Gehenna* carries a notion of punishment.
4,5,8	*I tell you*	These are very ***emphatic.***
8	*Son of Man*	An ambiguous title Jesus often used of Himself; it could have simply meant *human being* or refer to the supernatural being in Daniel 7:13-14.
11	*synagogues*	It could be *courts* as well as places of worship.
	rulers and authorities	Civil authorities, Jewish or Gentile
	what you will say	A greek term often used in sense of 'make a legal defence'.

Bible connections

2-9 *Parallel Passage* Matthew 10:26-33
(**n.b.** in Matthew – '2 sparrows per penny .....acknowledge before Father')

1 *yeast of the Pharisees* *see also* Matthew 16:6,12; Mark 8:15

4 *disciples as Jesus' friends* only here in Matthew, Mark and Luke *see also* John 15:14

5 *perfect love casts out fear* 1 John 4:18

10 *blaspheme - mere man claiming to be* God John 10:36 *c.f.* Luke 5:21; Mark 14:64; Matthew 26:65), in Old Testament (Leviticus 24:16)

.... against the Holy Spirit *see also* Matt 12:31-32; 1 John 5:16

11-12 *know how to defend ourselves* *see* Matthew 10:17,19,20; Luke 21:12,14-15; Exodus 4:12

Study 54 Luke 12:13-34

The parable of the rich fool/ Do not worry

Background

In this parable, which warns about greed and materialism, Jesus responds to a request from someone in the crowd. At v22 he goes on to tell his disciples *not* to worry about material things; God would provide all they needed.

In an agricultural economy, before supermarkets, pensions and benefit payments, most individuals were heavily involved in growing and storing their own food. That can breed a grasping spirit. Jesus shows that those who think like that need a drastic mental and spiritual shift in priorities.

Word List

14	*man*	Not a very cordial form of address!
15	*beware*	Greek *phulassesthe* – a strong word
20	*fool*	Unusual word c.f. 'silly' (2 Corinthians 11:16,17,21; 12:6,11)
25	*single hour to his life /*	Greek *helikia* can refer to *age* as in John 9:21 or
	single cubit to his height;	*Stature* as in Luke 19:3 (*cubit* = 18 inches, 45cm).
27	*consider .. lilies*	Teaching in the open air, Jesus may well have been pointing to these actual flowers as he spoke.
31	*kingdom*	*See* references on page 5.
32	*little flock*	The only time this phrase occurs in NT; implies God the Father cares for them like a good Shepherd for his sheep.

Bible connections

		Parallel Passage	Matthew 6:25-33
13	*divide inheritance*s	*see*	Luke 15:12
20	*fool*	*see*	Psalms 14 and 53
27	*Solomon…splendour*	Temple, luxurious Palace:	1 Kings 6-7
		gold:	1 Kings 10:14-25

Study 55 Luke 12:35-48

Watchfulness

Background

Long eastern robes could restrict movement; when working, people hitched them up under the belt at their waist, to be free for activity.

Eastern lamps were like sauceboats, with a cotton wick floating in oil emerging at the spout. The wick had to be kept trimmed and the oil replenished or the light went out.

The groom travelled to the bride's family home for the marriage and banquet, then brought her back to his house.

In the Old Testament, Israel divided the time between sunset and sunrise into three watches (Judges 7:19) presumably starting around 6pm, 10pm and 2am. In New Testament times, people seem to have used the *Roman* division of *four* watches, changing at roughly 6pm, 9pm, midnight and 3am (Mark 6:48).

Luke alone tells us about Peter's question in v .41. Matthew, in the parallel passage, omits it.

Word List

35	*your*	The word is emphatic.
39	*broken into*	*i.e.* 'Dug through' the mud brick wall
42	*manager*	*i.e.* A slave; he is called *doulos* (Greek for slave) in v43 even though he has control of all the other slaves.
46	*unbelievers*	*lit.* 'Unfaithful' - same root as 'faithful' (42)

Bible connections

Parallel Passages Matthew 25:1-13; Mark 13:33-37; Matthew 24:43-51

35	*dressed…for service*	1 Kings 18:46
36	*wedding banquet parable*	Luke 14:15-24
47, 48b	*responsibility of those who have received much*	*c.f.* Amos 3
48	*no such thing as absolute moral ignorance:*	*see* Romans 1: 20; 2:14-15

Study 56 Luke 12:49-59

Fire on the earth/Interpreting the times

Background information and Word List

In Jewish thought, fire was almost always the symbol of judgment. It was used for some of the Old Testament sacrifices, so was associated with destruction of a spotless animal in place of the guilty sinner. It is necessary in refining metals, so carried the idea of purifying.

The term baptism is often used metaphorically, especially in the sense of a person passing through some grim and terrible experience.

In Judea there were two jurisdictions, Roman and Jewish. Someone in trouble under one jurisdiction might appeal to the other successfully. People in dispute with God might think they can avoid heavenly judgment because an earthly court would acquit them; but God's is the higher court, with the greater penalty; hence the urgency of finding reconciliation with God *in time*.

51	*no*	The Greek is emphatic, *certainly not.*
56	*'time'*	Greek *kairos* - a chosen time or 'season'
57	*judge*	Same word as *'the judge'* (58)
	lit "And why even from yourselves do you not discern the righteous one / thing?"	
58	*reconciled*	*lit.* 'To set free' - an expression of the courts
59	*penny*	Greek *lepton* means 'thin one'. It was the smallest coin worth one sixteenth of a penny. It is the widow's mite of Mark 12:42

Bible connections

Parallel passages		Matthew 10:34-36; 16:2-3; 5:25-26
50	*a baptism to undergo*	*see* Mark 10:38; John 19:30
54	*cloud in west*	1 Kings 18:42-45
57	*righteous*	Acts 3:14; Rom3:10

Study 57 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 in v1.
Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem (9:51) but probably still in Galilee.

Word List

1	*Pilate*	Pontius Pilate, Roman Governor/Procurator of Judea
	Galileans	From area in North Palestine around the Sea of Galilee
	Blood	Passover only festival where people sacrificed own animals
3	*repent*	Turn round. Greek is present continuous tense: 'Unless you *keep turning* away from sin.'
4	*Siloam*	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, *2 Samuel 5:8*; but later linked by an underground tunnel dug in the time of Hezekiah to secure the water supply when attacked by Assyria. *2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:1-5*. The tower may have been on Ophel ridge above the pool, perhaps part of the nearby city wall.
5	*repent*	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	*fig tree*	It would normally be mature and fruit-bearing in 3 years.
	find any	The discovery of fruit requires close investigation as it is hidden among the leaves.
8	*dig around*	Root pruning, with fertiliser, inducing the plant to respond to the 'shock' by producing fruit

Bible connections

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

Study 58 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	*Sabbath*	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)
	synagogue	Building where Jews meet to worship God.
	crippled	Possibly *spondylitis deformans*; where the bones of the spine have been fused into a rigid mass
14	*synagogue ruler*	Person responsible for arrangements at services
	work	*see above*. Healing was a creative act, so they saw it as work and therefore forbidden that day.
16	*daughter of Abraham*	*i.e.* a Jewess, one of God's covenant people - (only use in whole Bible).
17	*humiliated, delighted*	both tenses are continuous

Bible connections

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

Study 59 Luke 13:18-21

The rule of God - 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'."[1]

See Study 65 for extra questions to ask of the passage when reading a parable.

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 (Matt 26:36; Mark 14:32 cf John 18:1,26); resurrection 19:41; 20:17)

[1] Much condensed from the Hearing the Word volume on Parables

Study 60 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 certainly did not expect Gentiles, whom they despised, to be included.

Jesus says there will be many surprises in the kingdom.

See Study 59 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. This Greek word gives the 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 and W, N and S i.e. Gentiles well represented* — *see* Isaiah 45:6; 49:12 Matthew 8:11

feast — *see* Study 7, p 23

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 likening Himself to a hen providing protection. Herod is the only person Jesus is recorded as having treated with contempt.

Word List

31	*Pharisees*	'the separated ones', known for their very strict interpretation of the Law, including adding multiple details
	Herod	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	*third day*	*i.e.* 'in a short time' *or* 'at the end of a definite time' or an oblique reference to His resurrection (*c.f.* 18:33)
	reach my goal	the end of His work in that region *or* the completion of His work of redemption

Bible connections

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

Study 62 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	*prominent Pharisee*	Greek may mean *a ruler,* perhaps a member of the Sanhedrin who was also a Pharisee.
	eat on the Sabbath	All meal preparation was done the day before to avoid working on ('breaking') the Sabbath.
2	*dropsy*	Old term for oedema, observable swelling from fluid accumulation in body tissues

Bible connections

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

Study 63 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	*blessed*	Truly happy, because of God's favour
18	*all alike*	The greek may also mean '*at once*'.
19	*five yoke*	*i.e.* 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	*compel/make*	Successfully persuade / Don't take 'no' for an answer!

Bible connections

Parallel Passage *c.f.* Matthew 22:2-14

15 *feast* *see* Isaiah 25:6; Luke 13:29; Revelation 19:9

23 *compelsee* Irresistible grace – that none may boast Ephesians 2:8,9a

24 *consequence of refusal of invitation* *see* Matthew 21:43; Acts 13:46

34Study 64 Luke 14:25-34

The cost of being a disciple

Background

Luke does not say *where* Jesus gave this teaching. It is possible he was going through Perea (to the East of the river Jordan); as far as we know He had not been there before. Jesus knew He was on his way to Jerusalem and the cross; whereas the crowds travelling with him assumed He was on his way to an empire.

The two illustrations are similar but make slightly different points.

The tower in the first is probably a vineyard tower, built to keep watch against thieves who might steal the harvest.

Word List

25	*hate*	Hyperbole, with the sense of *'loving less'*
26	*disciple*	Committed follower
27	*carry his cross*	Accepting death i.e. renouncing **all** rights, total commitment, prepared to go to any lengths
28	*tower*	Such as a vineyard tower built to keep watch against thieves who might steal the harvest
34	*salt*	There are many types of salt, not just Sodium Chloride as in our table salt. 'Salt' in 1st century Palestine was used for preserving and flavouring food, and for fertilising. It was far from pure to begin with, and if it got damp, all the various soluble chemicals in it could be leached out. At that point it was useless for flavouring or preserving food, or fertilising land.

Bible Connections

25	*hate/loving less*	*see* Genesis 29:31; Deuteronomy 21:15 *c.f.* Matthew 10:37
27	*carry his cross*	*see* Luke 9:23 *c.f.* Matthew 10:38
33	*cost of discipleship*	*c.f.* Philippians 3:7-8

Study 65 Luke 15:1-7

The parable of the committed shepherd

Background

Shepherds in Judea had a hard, dangerous task. The narrow central plateau was only a few miles wide before plunging down *via* dangerous cliffs to the barren desert. There were no restraining fences to keep grazing sheep in – or wild animals out – except when the flock was in a walled sheepfold at night, the shepherd lying across the opening. Before sheep dogs, shepherds used a sling to land a stone *beyond* a straying sheep or to drive off a predator. The shepherd was personally responsible for the sheep. If one was lost, he must at least bring home the fleece to show how it had died.

v1-2 describe the situation that gave rise to these 3 famous lost-and-found stories. These are all part of the same parable- 'Jesus told them this parable' (3)

n.b. The three stories all finish - 'Rejoice' with me I have found my lost: sheep, …coin, …son (6,9,32) (n.b. in Greek - 'be glad' (32) is same word as 'rejoice'.)

Parables

See Study 59 for a general introduction to Parables.

When studying a parable, add these extra questions to your own ones in the LEARN section on Page iii above:

Given that a parable describes the relationship between God and people:

a) Where is God represented?
b) With whom are we meant to identify?
c) What is the subject that Jesus is addressing?

Word List

1 *tax collectors* despised by most for collecting money for the occupying Roman army, and getting rich themselves in the process.

'sinners' derogatory term used by Pharisees to refer to anyone who did not observe their version of the law in all its petty details. (e.g. shepherds at work *could* not observe their Sabbath rules.)

2 *Pharisees* 'the separated ones', known for their very strict interpretation of the Law. They added multiple details to the basic ten commandments, e.g defining 'work' forbidden on the Sabbath. They thought *eating* with 'sinners' implied approval of their sins.

3 *suppose* lit. 'What man of you'. ('what woman' (8))

Bible Connections

2 *Jesus eating with 'sinners'* *see* Matt 9:10-11; Luke 5:29-30; 19:5-7

4 *seeking the lost sheep* *see* Psalm 119:176; Ezekiel 34:11-16
Luke 19:10; Matthew 15:24

The Good Shepherd is Jesus. *see* John 10 e.g. v 10-14

Study 66 Luke 15:8-10

The parable of the careful woman

Background

See study 59 for general introduction to parables, and about Pharisees and 'sinners'. This second story is still answering the objectors in v1,2.

Palestinian houses had no windows or at best very small ones, high up, so were always dark. Even in daytime, she would need a lamp to search by. The floor was beaten earth, covered with dried reeds and rushes, so looking for a coin was very like 'looking for a needle in a haystack', as we would say.

'Ten silver coins' may refer to a head-dress of ten silver coins linked together by a silver chain which was the mark of a married woman. If so, it was vested with emotional meaning for her. Losing one was like a bride today losing her engagement ring. If not, at least the value to a poor person was considerable.

The Rabbinic writers before Jesus also use a lost coin as an illustration: 'If a man seeks for a lost coin, how much more should he seek for the Law'. But nowhere do the Rabbis say, *God* seeks *sinners*. Jesus broke the mould. His audience of outcasts had never heard anything like it.

Word List

8	*ten*	Decimal system used in Palestine. Ten signifies human completeness c.f. 10 powers that can't separate us from God's love (Romans 8:38ff) 10 sins that exclude from God's kingdom. (1 Corinthians 6:10)
	silver coin	Greek *drachma,* the only time the New Testament uses this exact word (but see below). Roughly equivalent to the Latin *denarius*, the wage a labourer could earn for one full day's work.
10	*I tell you*	Phrase reported in all four Gospels – used for emphasis

Bible Connections

8	*coins:*	*widow's gift*	Mark 12:41-44
		two-drachma coin	Matthew 17:24-27
		mina –about 3 months wages	Luke 19:13
10	*seeking what is lost, e.g. Zacchaeus*		Luke 14:21; 19:5,10

Study 67 Luke 15:11-32

The parable of the forgiving father

Background

Jesus is not dealing here with the whole gospel message but with the one great fact of the Father's pardoning love. In contrast, the Pharisees thought God would rather see a sinner destroyed than saved; that's what *they* wanted!

The younger son asks for 'my share of the estate'. This is a technical formula. A man might leave his goods to his heirs in his will (*c.f.* Hebrews 9:16-17) in which case he was bound by the provisions of the Law *i.e.* the first born received two-thirds of the estate. (Deuteronomy 21:17) But he could make gifts before he died and this gave him a freer hand.

To a Jew, the pig was an unclean animal (Leviticus 11:7) and under normal circumstances he would have nothing at all to do with it.

Word list

16	*pods*	the seeds of the carob tree.
18	*sinned*	done what is wrong.
19	*hired men*	day labourers, the lowest rank of slaves.
20	*ran*	unusual for an elderly Middle Eastern man.
	kissed	Greek compound word *(kata + phileo)* may mean 'kissed many times' or 'kissed tenderly'.
22	*best robe*	sign of position.
	ring	conveyed authority.
	sandals	slaves went barefoot; freemen wore sandals.
	fattened calf	animal bred for a special occasion.
25	*music and dancing*	performed by entertainers not those feasting.

Bible Connections

20	*warm welcome*	*c.f.* Genesis 45:14-15
21	*sinned against heaven and against you*	*see* Psalm 51:4
22	*robe*	*see* Zechariah 3:4; Revelation 6:11
	ring	*see* Genesis 41:42
23	*was dead …is alive again*	*see* Ephesians 2:1,5; 5:14
28	*older brother angry*	*c.f.* Jonah 4:1
32	*younger brother's status*	*see* Malachi 3:17
	be glad (Greek 'rejoice')	*see* 15:6,7…9,10

Study 68 Luke 16:1-13

The parable of the shrewd manager

Background

The Greek of the opening sentence indicates that this parable followed the telling of the three in ch.15 without any change of scene.

A master possessed a slave, and possessed him exclusively. A slave had no spare time; every moment of his day belonged to his one master.

Word List

1	*manager*	Greek *oikonomos*, steward or factor of a household
6	*800 gallons*	Greek *100 batous*, (about 3,000 litres)
7	*1,000 bushels*	Greek 100 *korous* (the yield from about 100 acres)
8	*Dishonest*	Greek *adikias,* unrighteousness
9	*worldly wealth*	Greek *mamona tes adikias*, unrighteous mammon
13	*servant*	Greek *doulos*, a household slave
	serve	Greek *douleuin,* serve as a slave

Bible Connections

8	*people of this world*	*see* Psalm 17:14
	people of the light	*see* Isaiah 9:2; John 12:36
9	*use of our possessions*	*see* Matthew 19:21, Luke 12:33
10	*criteria for greater responsibility*	*see* Matthew 25:21,23; Luke 19:17
13	*cannot serve God and money*	*also in* Sermon on the Mount - Matthew 6:24

Study 69 Luke 16:14-18

The central teaching!

Background

The Law allowed men to divorce their wives (Deuteronomy 24:1ff) though women could not divorce their husbands. Pharisees of the Rabbinic school of Hillel, who were very meticulous in trying to keep the Law, held that anything unpleasing to the husband was grounds for him to divorce his wife.

Word List

15	*abomination*	('detestable' NIV) Only used 4 times in NT – also in OT: 'the abomination that causes desolation (Daniel 11:31;12:11 - Matt 24:15; Mk 13:14); abomination excludes from book of Life (Rev 21:27)
16	*force*	implies violence (Acts 5:26; 21:35)
	the Law and the Prophets	the whole of the Old Testament
	John	John the Baptist, *see Luke 3*
	kingdom of God	the rule of God in all of life. Luke, writing mainly for Gentiles, most often uses this phrase, rather than '*kingdom of heaven'* often used by Matthew, whose Jewish audience would have understood.
17	*least stroke of a pen*	the old translations say *tittle,* a small projection on some Hebrew letters to distinguish them from others.

Bible Connections

17	*jot or tittle*	Matthew 5:18 AV. 'Jot' is the smallest Hebrew letter *yodh,* not much bigger than our apostrophe: '
18	*God instituted marriage*	*see* Genesis 2:24
	Divorce	*see* Deuteronomy 24:1; Matthew 5:31; 19:1-9; Mark 10:1-12; 1 Corinthians 7:10-16

Study 70 Luke 16:19-31

Believe in the Jesus of the whole Bible

Background

This parable appears only in Luke. Lazarus is the only person in Jesus' parables to be given a name The rich man is sometimes referred to as 'Dives', which is simply the Latin for 'rich man'.

The people who normally wore 'purple and fine linen' were the priests, but that does not necessarily mean the rich man *was* a priest.

Word List

19	*purple*	cloth, dyed with a very costly dye (from shellfish *murex).*
	fine linen	undergarment
20	*Lazarus*	from Hebrew *Eleazer* which means, 'God has helped'
	gate	The word denotes a large gate or portico like that of a city or palace.
22	*Abraham's side*	a visual way of alluding to heaven: imagine people at a feast, reclining on left elbow, so the person sitting to the right of Abraham had his head close to the chest of the great patriarch – a picture of bliss.
23	*hell*	Greek, *Hades*, place of the departed. Here it seems to be equivalent to *Gehenna*,(12:28) the place of punishment.
26	*great chasm…fixed*	i.e. 'in the afterlife, there is no passing from one state to the other. The Greek implies this is the *purpose*, not simply the *result* of the chasm.'
29	*Moses and the Prophets*	*i.e.* the whole of the Old Testament *as in* v16

Bible Connections

19	*neglecting the poor*	*see* Ezekiel 16:49
20	*beggar at gate*	*see also* Acts 3:2
26	*great chasm*	*see also* Parable of sheep and goats, Matthew 25:32-46 - compare v34: 'the kingdom prepared *for you* since the foundation of the world,' with v 41: '… into the eternal fire prepared *for the devil and his angels*.'

Study 71 Luke 17:1-10

Forgive as you have been forgiven

Background information

Connections between these paragraphs are not immediately obvious.

The Rabbis had a saying that if any man forgave another *three* times, he was a perfect man.

It was thought that the roots of the black mulberry tree would remain in the earth for 600 years, so it would be very difficult to remove!

v7-10 refer to standard practice with slaves in his day. Compare Jesus' own attitude in 12:37 and 22:24-27.

Word List

1	*Disciples*	Luke uses 'disciples' synonymously with Apostles / the twelve (9:10,12,15)
	things that cause people to sin – gk *skandalon* .	giving the English - 'scandal' meaning: 'bait in a trap' or a 'stumbling block'.
2	*millstone*	massive, heavy stone used for grinding grain into flour.
	little ones	very *young* believers; or *new* believers, whatever their age.
6	*mustard seed*	proverbial for its small size.
10	*unworthy*	Greek *'achreioi'*; a negative? May mean 'not yielding gain'. *c.f.* 'worthless servant' (Matthew 25:30)

Bible Connections

4	*seven times*	*see* Matthew 18:21,22
6	*mustard seed*	*see also* Matthew 13:31-32
10	*our best service does not give us a claim on God*	*c.f.* 1 Corinthians 9:16

Study 72 Luke 17:11-19

Obedience to Jesus heals; Faith in Jesus saves

Background

Leviticus 14 gives us the regulations for cleansing from infectious skin diseases. The priest acted as a kind of public health inspector to certify that a person really was cured and no longer infectious.

In Jesus' day, Jews and Samaritans normally had 'no dealings with one another' (John 4:9,22). Israel was once a United Kingdom, but it had split under two kings, with 10 tribes in the North retaining the group name, *Israel*, and 2 tribes in the South, known as *Judah*, in a land area known as *Judea*.

The Northern kingdom (*Samaria* was both the capital and the area) had been conquered, exiled, dispersed, and had intermarried with non-Jews, adopting their religious practices. Later, the southern kingdom (capital, *Jerusalem*) had also been conquered and exiled but its people had kept their identity and returned to Jerusalem. So, Jews (people from Judah) saw themselves as the authentic people of God, and Samaritans as renegades.

Word List

11	*Jerusalem*	Capital of Judea, site of Temple; Jesus was heading there to celebrate Passover.
	Samaria	Area north of Judea and south of Galilee.
12	*leprosy*	Greek word used for various skin diseases.
	at a distance	The Law required them to do this.
13	*master*	Unusual word, usually used by disciples (5:5; 8:24) means 'one who stand by' c.f. a master or a doctor
14	*cleansed*	Outwardly/ ceremonially pure (c.f. 11:41)
17	*'healed'*	*Greek sozo* also translated as 'save' (19:10)

Bible Connections

16 *giving God thanks* — *see* Psalm 103:2

18 *this foreigner* — Other verses which portrayed Samaritans in a good light: *see* Luke 10:29-37, John 4:4-30, 39-42

Study 73 Luke 17:20-37

Receive the Kingdom by giving up your life

Background information

Luke here has some sayings peculiar to this Gospel and some shared with Matthew 24.

Noah was a faithful man chosen by God to build an ark so that some would be saved from the flooding which would come because of man's wickedness.

Lot was Abraham's nephew. He was saved out of Sodom when God destroyed it because of its wickedness. Despite being warned not to, Lot's wife looked back; because of her disobedience/delay, she was turned into a 'pillar of salt'.

Word List

21	*within you*	Or *among you, i.e.* present in the person and ministry of Jesus
22	*Son of Man*	An ambiguous title Jesus used to refer to Himself before it was time to declare His Messiah-hood, openly. It could have meant just an ordinary human being; with hindsight, we realise he was alluding to the divine figure in Daniel 7.
34	*taken*	*i.e.* taken to be with Jesus

Bible Connections

		see Daniel 7:13
23	*false expectations about the Son of Man's coming*	*see* Matthew 24:23; Luke 21:8
26	*Noah*	*see* Genesis 6:5-23
28	*Lot*	*see* Genesis 19:1-28
32	*Lot's wife*	*see* Genesis 19:26

Study 74 Luke 18: 1-8

Pray faithfully for the King to return.

Background

Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem. (17:11) and the confrontations with the Pharisees are building up. In ch.17 he tells the disciples they will not know in advance the time of his second coming.

The judge in the parable is not a Jewish judge (disputes were normally taken before the elders and not into public courts.) He would have been a paid magistrate appointed either by Herod or by the Romans. Such judges were notoriously corrupt. **n.b.** The parable does not *liken* God to the unjust judge; it *contrasts* God to such a person.

The Jewish custom was to pray only three times a day at the most, as did Daniel (Daniel 6:10), in case they wearied God.

Word List

3	*justify*	Greek *ekdikeson* same root as greek *dikaios* - 'righteous' Luke 23:47; *c.f.* Romans 3:10; 4:3,5
4	*wear me out*	literally 'give a black eye' – used here metaphorically!
7	*keep putting them off*	The Greek is difficult. It may mean 'though he bear long with them' or may be from a Semitic expression, 'He postpones his wrath'.
7	*Chosen ones*	Unusual word – refers to 'children of Jacob' (1 Chronicles 16:13, Psalm 105:6)
	day and night	The only use of this phrase in all 4 Gospels
8	*quickly*	In terms of God's time – see 2 Peter 3:8
	Son of Man	Title Jesus used of himself, emphasising his humanity.

Bible Connections

Story with a similar point - Luke 11:5-8

1	*persistent prayer*	*see* 11:5-8; Acts 1:14; Romans 1:10, 12:12; Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17
2	*not fearing God or man*	*contrast with* 2 Corinthians 8:21
3	*widow*	*see* Deuteronomy 16:11; Psalm68: Luke 21:1-4
7	*God listens to those who cry to him*	*see* Exodus 22:23; Psalm 88:1; Rev 6:10
8	*coming of Son of Man*	*see* Matthew 16:27

Study 75 Luke 18: 9-14

Be humble!

Background

Luke does not identify by name any particular group to whom this parable applied. The error is typical of the Pharisees but by no means confined to them. It would be normal to see a Pharisee in the temple but surprising to see a tax collector there. Tax collectors were regarded as dishonest and betrayers of their own countrymen.

Word List

9	*righteous*	Greek, *dikaios,* same root as word for 'justice' (3,5,8,14)
11	*stood*	This was the normal posture for prayer *see* Mark 11:25.
12	*fast twice a week*	although the Law (Torah) only required fasting on the Day of Atonement, ie once a year
	give a tenth	Law said only certain crops be tithed. Pharisees tithed even tiny crops like garden herbs (Luke 11.42).
13	*look up to heaven*	Normal in Jewish prayer then
	beat his breast	The verb is continuous, *kept beating*; a sign of sorrow.
	have mercy on me	Greek *hilastheti* meaning 'be propitiated' or 'let your anger be removed' i.e. He knows he deserves judgment for his sins.
14	*justified*	reckoned as righteous, 'acquitted of his sins'

Bible Connections

9	*confident of own righteousness…*	*see* 16:15, Isaiah 65:5
	going to the temple to pray	*see* Acts 3:1
12	*fasting required*	*see* Leviticus 16:29
	tithing required	*see* Deuteronomy 14:22
13	*beating breast, sign of repentance*	*see* Isaiah 66:2; Jeremiah 31:19; Luke 23:48
	God have mercy on me.	*see* 5:32; 1 Timothy 1:15

Study 76 Luke 18: 15-17

Receive Jesus like a child

Background

Jesus was talking to those who were confident of their own righteousness (18:9) and follows on from the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. It gives a contrast to the Pharisee by speaking of babies and little children.

It was the custom in Palestine for mothers to bring their child to some distinguished rabbi on their first birthday that he might bless them.

It is not clear here why the disciples rebuked those who brought the children. Jesus shows that he welcomes them.

Word List

15 *touch them* In the sense of 'lay hands on them', a natural action in blessing

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 18:2-4; 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16

15 Jesus' rebuked Fever (4:39), demons (4:41; 9:42), wind (8:24) James and John's vengeance (9:55)

17 *I tell you the truth* (KJV – 'verily) In Luke associated with Jesus' second coming, judgment, glory (4:24; 11:51; 12:37; 13:35; 18:29; 21:22; 23:42)

Study 77 Luke 18: 18-30

Count the cost/Receive the Lord

Background

In his gospel, Luke uses the term 'rulers' for a group of people that differed from the elders, scribes and high priests.

Jesus replies to the ruler's question with one of His own (a recognised method of teaching) to invite the man to think more deeply about what he was saying and asking.

The rabbis held that the Law could be kept in its entirety. It was also commonly held that riches were a sign of God's blessing, so the rich had the best chance of good things in the next world as well as enjoying them in this life.

Word List

18	*ruler*	A very general term denoting Roman and Jewish officials of all kinds
	good teacher	Thoughtless flattery, a term not used by the rabbis because it ascribed to a man an attribute possessed only by God
	inherit	*i.e.* Receive the 'gift' from another (**n.b.** - not earned)
26	*who*	*i.e* .'who (of any kind)?' not 'what rich man?'
28	*Peter*	One of the 12 disciples, close followers of Jesus.

Bible Connections

c.f. with Luke 10:25-37

20	*Commandments 5-9*	*see* Exodus 20:12-16; Deuteronomy 5:16-20; Romans 13:9
22	*sell … give to the poor*	*c.f.* Acts 2:45
	treasure in heaven	*see* Matthew 6:19-20
24	*hard for rich to enter heaven*	*see* Proverbs 11:28
28	*Peter and apostles left all…*	*see* Matthew 4:19-20
29	*God supplies all our needs*	*see* Philippians 4:19

Study 78 Luke 18: 31-34

Listen to God and seek His understanding

Background

Jesus tells the twelve disciples what is going to happen to Him in Jerusalem. They do not understand because they did not know/realise the meaning of much of their Scriptures (our Old Testament).

They thought from Psalm 110 that the Messiah would be a conquering hero; they had not grasped He was also the suffering servant of Isaiah 53.

On *six* previous occasions, Luke has recorded Jesus predicting his sufferings: Luke 5:35; 9:22, 44-45; 1 2:50; 13:32-35; 17:25, but even now they still do not get it. This is the first time He explains that His suffering will involve being handed over to the Gentiles.

Word List

31	*the Twelve*	Jesus' close followers, whom he had chosen to be with him
	Jerusalem	The capital and centre of religious life and government
	the prophets	Our Old Testament Scriptures
	Son of Man	Title Jesus often used of Himself, emphasises His humanity
32	*Gentiles*	*i.e.* The Romans, the non-Jewish rulers of the country

Bible Connections

See also Acts 2:22-24

31	*going up to Jerusalem*	*see* Luke 9:51; Matthew 16:21
	written by the prophets	*see e.g.* Psalm 22; Isaiah 53 Jonah 2/Matthew 12:40
	Son of Man	*see* Daniel 7:13

Study 79 Luke 18: 35-43

A blind beggar receives his sight

Background

Crowds were following Jesus as He journeyed towards Jerusalem. Rabbis often taught their followers by talking as they walked along together.

As He approached Jericho before heading west to Jerusalem, a blind man heard the commotion and asked who was coming. Given his reaction, he must have already heard something about Jesus and his ministry.

Word List

35	*Jericho*	City near the river Jordan, c 800ft below sea level A curse had been placed on any who would rebuild it after its destruction by Joshua. (Joshua 6:26) (Jerusalem was 2600ft above sea level – a hard journey of 8/9 hours.)
37	*Nazareth*	Jesus lived in Nazareth, a small town in Galilee, until he started his ministry. (*c.f.* 4:16)
38	*called out*	The word describes a normal, loud shout.
	Son of David	Title the Jews used to refer to the long-awaited Messiah. Luke, writing with Gentiles in mind, uses it only once more; Matthew, writing mainly for a Jewish audience, uses it more often.
39	*rebuked*	Harsh censorship *c.f.* Jesus and demons (4:41; 9:42)
	shouted all the more	Different verb from v38, indicating a shout of utter desperation – *c.f.* 'bellowed'
42	*heal*	Greek *sozo* – heal or save (*e.g.* 19:10)

Bible Connections

See also Mark 10:46-52	Mark names the blind man as Bartimaeus, who was healed as Jesus *left* Jericho.
Matthew 20:29-34	*Two* blind men
38 *Son of David*	*see* Ezekiel 34:23; Psalm 89:28-37; 132:11,12; David was from Bethlehem 1 Samuel 17:12. Micah 5:2. Matthew 1:1,6; 12:23; 21:9; 22:41-45; //Luke 20:41

Study 80 Luke 19: 1-10

God welcomes the repentant sinner

Background

Jericho was on an important trade-route from Jerusalem to the East and there was a good deal of local wealth *e.g.* from the famous balsam groves in the area.

The Romans operated a taxation system to pay for government, army and road-building. They took a census of the population, divided the needed income by that number, and held an auction. The highest bidder paid that year's taxes in advance, and then held the right to extract money from the population, backed by Roman soldiers to enforce payment.

He could then subcontract to several others who did the actual gathering of money (e.g. Matthew, before he became a disciple of Jesus: Luke 5:27; Matthew 9:9). Zacchaeus was a 'Chief' tax collector. The system lent itself to unscrupulous people who saw it as a chance to take more than the official rate. They wanted to recover their outlay, plus gain enough to live on and outbid next year's competitors.

Under Jewish law, robbery with violence needed a four-fold restitution: if you killed someone else's sheep you had to pay back four sheep (Exodus 22:1; 2 Samuel 12:6). But for voluntary confession and restitution after fraud (as here) you had to pay back the original amount plus only one fifth (Leviticus 6:5; Numbers 5:7).

Word List

2	*Zacchaeus*	Hebrew name meaning 'pure' or 'righteous'
	chief tax collector	Probably head of the local taxation department
4	*running (and climbing)*	Very undignified for Jewish man
	sycamore-fig tree	Very closely related to the mulberry tree, with spreading branches easy to climb
5	*I must stay*	A strong expression
9	*son of Abraham*	A true Jew who follows the faith of Abraham
10	*lost*	In the wrong place (Luke 15:4,8,32)

Bible Connections

7	*guest of a 'sinner'*	*see also* Matthew 9:11
8	*Law required – for violent theft - four times*	*see* Ex 22:1
	- for voluntary restitution original - one fifth	Lev 6:5; Numbers 5:7
10	*seek and save the lost*	*see* Isaiah 53:11; John 1:29; 3:17

Study 81 Luke 19: 11-27

Be prepared, Jesus will judge us all, eventually

Background

Jericho is about 17 miles from Jerusalem, so the journey is nearly over. This led some to think the 'Kingdom of God' would appear immediately. So, Jesus told them this parable.

A 'nobleman going to a far country to receive a kingdom' would remind the Jews of a vassal going to Rome to be made king. This had happened with Herod the Great's son Archelaus. When Herod died in 4BC, he bequeathed Judea to him with the title of king. The people hated him and sent 50 representatives to Rome to ask he *not* be made king. The emperor, while confirming his authority, did not give him the title of 'king'. Archelaus built a magnificent palace in Jericho and an aqueduct for irrigation purposes.

Word List

12	*distant country*	i.e. He would not be returning soon.
13	*mina*	1 mina = 100 drachmas i.e. about 3 month's wages
20	*in a piece of cloth*	i.e. It did not comply with the minimum requirements for safety which required burial in the earth.
21	*severe*	Unusual word, (very negative), meaning 'ungenerous, mean'
27	*enemies of mine*	Those who had set themselves in opposition to him (*see* v14).

Bible Connections

There are resemblances to the parable of the talents in Matthew 25

11	*coming of the kingdom*	*c.f.* Luke 17:20; Acts 1:6
17	*well done…*	*see* Proverbs 27:18
22	*judge you by your own words*	*c.f.* 2 Samuel 1:16; Job 15:6

Study 82 Luke 19: 28-48

Welcome Jesus as King

Background

Luke tells us only the facts about Jesus' approach to Jerusalem; Matthew and John add the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 about Zion's king coming on an ass's colt. The ass was the mount of a man of peace, a merchant or a priest. An earthly king was more likely to appear on a mighty warhorse.

By this time there is a price on Jesus' head (John 11:57), so this entry is an act of glorious defiance, focussing the attention upon himself, and a deliberate claim to be the promised king.

From Mark we know Jesus cleansed the temple the *day after* the triumphal entry. The only place in the temple where a non-Jew could go to pray and meditate was the outside courtyard, called 'the court of the Gentiles'. This, however, was where the traders had set up their stalls for changing ordinary (secular) money into the 'sacred' Temple coinage and for the sale of sacrificial animals, which had to be 'pure, spotless, without blemish'. If you had brought your own animal and the priest found a fault with it, you had to buy one of theirs, at their price! There was no peace for Gentiles to pray. Besides, the Jews were being charged extortionate rates of exchange. The Temple was the usual place for teaching. As He did this, Jesus aroused even more opposition from officialdom, while the crowds of ordinary people 'hung on his words'.

Word List

29	*Bethany*	Village c 2miles from Jerusalem on east of Mount of Olives
	Bethphage	Location unknown. It means '*place of young figs*'
30	*colt*	Word could mean the young bred from a horse or an ass
	The Lord	Same word as in vs 38
41	*wept*	'Wailed' *i.e.* sobbing.
47	*leaders among the people*	The ruling classes generally.

Bible Connections *See* also Matthew 21:1-9; Mark 11:1-10; John 12:12-15

36	*spreading cloaks*	*c.f.* 2 Kings 9:13
38	"*Blessed is. . .name of the Lord*"	*quoting* Psalm 118:25,26;
	peace in…highest	*and the angels in* Luke 2:14
40	*stones cry out*	*c.f.* Habakkuk 2:11
41	*weeping over Jerusalem*	*see* Isaiah 22:4
43	*embankment, siege*	*see* Isaiah 29:3
44	*dash to ground, complete overthrow*	*c.f.* Psalm 137
46	*house of prayer*	*see* Isaiah 56:7
	den of robbers	*see* Jeremiah 7:11

Study 83 Luke 20:1-8

Submit to God if you want to hear His voice

Background

The chief priests, teachers of the Law and the elders were component parts of the Jewish Sanhedrin. This was the supreme council and governing body of the Jews. It consisted of :
Chief priests were the current High Priest and former high priests
Scribes were 'lawyers' – they were experts in the Law (first 5 books of Bible)
Elders were representative heads of families. (*c.f.* Numbers 11:25)

The chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders were plotting to kill Jesus. (19:47) They thought Jesus had no right to act as he had in the temple (only the Messiah would be at liberty to act without their permission) so they sent a delegation and came to question Him about his authority, hoping to trap him into a corner. Knowing this, Jesus puts them on the horns of a dilemma with His counter-question.

Word list

1	*gospel*	God's 'good news' to the people
3	*John's baptism*	A baptism for the forgiveness of sins in preparation for one who would baptise in the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:4,7)

Bible Connections

2	*Jesus' authority*	*see* Matthew 7:29; 26:64; 28:18 Mark 1:27 Luke 10:22 John 3:31,35; 5:26-27; 7:16; 17:2 Ephesians 1:21 Philippians 2:9-10 Colossians 2:10 1 Peter 3:2
3	*Jesus replying with a question*	Luke 5:21 – 22-24; 6:2 – 3-5; 11:15 – 17-22
	John's baptism	*see* Luke 3:1-6

Study 84 Luke 20:9-18

Do not think that you can go on ignoring God

Background

Judea in the time of Jesus was in the throes of economic trouble and labour unrest. There were many absentee landlords who let out their lands in this way. Rent was usually a fixed amount, or a percentage, of the produce, irrespective of the success or failure of the crop.

Word list

9 *parable* A story with one main point. See Studies 59 and 65. (By contrast, in an allegory, every detail of a story has another meaning eg *'Pilgrim's Progress')*

vineyard A field for growing vines to produce grapes.

10 *servant* bond servant or slave

17 *capstone or cornerstone* A vitally important stone in a building that give it its stability or alignment.

Bible Connections

Israel rejecting God's messengers *cf* Nehemiah 9:26;,Jeremiah 7:25f; 25:4-7; Matthew 23:34; Acts 7:52; Hebrews 11:32, 36-38

9 *Israel as God's vineyard* *see* Isaiah 5:1-7

The people – also at the trial – cried 'Crucify Him.' *see* Luke 23:13,21

13 *beloved son* *see* Luke 3:22

17 *Jesus our cornerstone* *see* Psalm 118 :22; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7

Study 85 Luke 20:19-26

Never try to get round Jesus

Background

The tribute to be paid to Caesar was a poll tax of one *denarius* (a day's wage for an agricultural labourer) to be paid once a year by everyone aged fourteen to sixty five.

It was levied in Judea from AD 6 when Archelaus was deposed and it became a Roman province under a procurator. It was very unpopular and led to the rebellion of Judas the Galilean (see Acts 5:37) which was quickly suppressed.

Some Jews held that it was wrong to pay tribute to anyone other than God.

Word List

21	*partiality*	Take sides, influenced by others
22	*Is it right?*	Or *is it lawful* meaning, in accordance with God's law?
	taxes	Greek word for tribute *ie* not taxes like custom duties.
23	*duplicity*	Or craftiness. The Greek word used has overtones of unscrupulousness., 'ready to do anything'.
24	*denarius*	Roman silver coin with effigy of Emperor Tiberias stamped on it.
25	*render*	**n.b.** Not 'giving' but 'owing' (c.f. surrender)
26	*likeness*	c.f. Image (Gen 1:26,27)

Bible Connections

see also Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17

24	*denarius*	*see* Matthew 20:2; John 12:5
25	*attitude to authorities*	*see* John 19:10-11; Romans 13:1-6; 1 Tim 2:1-4; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17

Study 86 Luke 20:27-40

What happens when you die?

Background

Luke refers to the Sadducees, only here and in (Acts 23:7-8) They were mostly priests and High Priests from the most powerful 'aristocratic' families.

They ruled the Temple. Despite this, they did not believe in the soul and its after life, the resurrection, rewards and retributions, angels and demons! *(The New Bible Dictionary)*

'Levirate marriage' is described in Deuteronomy 25:5ff. To retain land within each of Israel's tribes, a widow was expected to marry the brother of her late husband, and he was expected to marry her. By New Testament times it seems to have fallen into disuse, so that the question they put to Jesus was an academic one. They clearly regarded a definitive answer as impossible and the impossibility of an answer implied to them the impossibility of a resurrection.

Jesus shows that life in heaven will be significantly different!

Word list

27	*Sadducees*	See background material above
34	*sons (people) of this age*	Denotes all who live in this world
	marry…given in marriage	In those days, men 'married'; women were 'given in marriage'. i.e. Jesus was referring to *weddings* which on earth facilitate identifiable reproduction, to replace those lost by death.
35	*that age*	*i.e.* The life to come
37	*account of the bush*	*i.e.* God meeting with Moses at the burning bush

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27

28	Levirate marriage	*see* Deuteronomy 25:5ff
37	God reveals His Name.	*see* Exodus 3:1-6

Study 87 Luke 20:41-21:4

Be humble before God and He will exalt you

Background

In antiquity earlier generations were regarded as greater and wiser than the present one. David was seen as the ideal king, so his descendants were by definition less important than he.

The people who used the title 'Son of David' for the Messiah, however, saw the Messiah as someone who would defeat all Israel's foes and bring in a new kingdom of David. They thought of David's son as similar to David in being, outlook and achievement.

Jesus points out the inconsistency – David himself called the Messiah, 'Lord'. (Psalm 110:1)

It was forbidden for teachers of the law to accept money for their teaching. But there was nothing to stop people making gifts to teachers and this was regarded as bringing merit to the giver.

Word list

ch 20

41	*Christ*	Messiah (*Christ* is the Greek word for the Hebrew word, *Messiah;* both mean 'anointed one')
46	*flowing/long robes*	Sign of distinction, marking the wearers as gentlemen of leisure
47	*widows*	The most defenceless group of the day
	show/pretence	Their prayers were only an illusion of piety.

ch 21

1	*Jesus looked up*	Rabbis sat down to teach.
	treasury/offering box	At the Temple, the Court of the Women, inside the court of the Gentiles, had 13 collection boxes for service expenses.
2	*small copper coins*	*lepta*, was 1/100th of a denarius, a labourer's daily wage. i.e., a Jewish copper coin of very little value.

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 22:42-46; Mark 12:35-40, 41-44

20:41 *Son of David* *see* 2 Samuel 7:12-13
Matthew 1:1; 9:27, 12:23, 15:22, 21:9 etc

42 "The LORD *(Yahweh)* said to my Lord *(Adonai*)…." (Psalm 110:1)

Yahweh the unspoken divine name (Exodus 3:14,15) *Adonai* - Lord or King

Study 88 Luke 21:5-24

Reckon on what it means to follow Jesus

Background

The disciples were looking for a sign of the coming destruction. Jesus does not give any one sign but warns followers not to be led astray in the tumultuous happenings that lie ahead:

v5 destruction of the Temple

v8 false Messiahs

v9-11 trouble among nations at large

v12-19 persecution of the church by Jews and Gentiles, which will also be an opportunity to bear witness to Jesus

v20-24 destruction of Jerusalem (took place about 40 years later, in AD 70; Temple totally destroyed and there was a staggering loss of life)

Word list

5 *beautiful/noble stones* Columns of white marble, 40ft high, each made of one single block of stone

gift/offerings Most famous was a great vine made of solid gold with grape clusters as tall as a man.

12 *deliver you to synagogues* Jewish law was administered from synagogues (*lit* place where people gather together)

Bible Connections

see also Matthew 24; Mark 13

12-17 *persecution* *see* also Matt 10:17-22; John 15:18-25

witnessing under persecution *see* Philippians 1:12-14

Study 89 Luke 21:25-38

Expect Jesus' return

Background

When mankind 'fell', all creation was affected (Genesis 3:14ff). Similarly, the flood was precipitated by the enormity of human sin and the whole world suffered (Genesis 6:5ff). At the end of time, Jesus tells us to expect calamity and 'natural' disaster before He returns.

The fig tree was a well-known symbol of the Jews as a people. If that is its maning here, 'this generation' (32) could refer to 'a race or family of people.' If so, it would then show God's intent to preserve His people, the Jews, down the ages, through rejection, persecution and holocaust, to the end.

If 'until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled' (24) referred to the end of the rule of Jerusalem by non-Jews in 1949, some thought the return of the King and the establishment of His Kingdom might also have been approaching fulfilment!

After three years of ministry, in Luke's Gospel, Jesus concludes his teaching to his disciples with a warning – "watch out".

Word list

27	*Son of Man*	Old Testament term used by Jesus of Himself
28	*redemption*	Release on payment of a price
32	*this generation*	Difficult phrase; It can mean 'a race or family' and so could refer to the continued existence of the Jews as a people.

Bible Connections

see also Matthew 24; Mark 13

Study 90 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 for 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	*unleavened bread*	During this Feast all yeast was removed from houses.
3	*Satan*	*lit* 'Accuser'; the most evil being, the devil, who tempted Jesus at the start of his ministry Luke 4:2ff.
	Iscariot	Hebrew, probably meaning 'man of Kerioth' (a place)
4	*betray*	*lit* Hand over
5	*agreed*	'Covenanted', *c.f.* new covenant (20)
7	*lamb*	Ritually slaughtered at the Temple (until AD 70)
	Peter and John	Two of the twelve disciples. They were from Galilee.
10	*man carrying…jar*	Women usually carried water *jars*; men carried water *skins*
11	*The Teacher*	respectful form of address for a rabbi, *i.e.* teacher
12	*guest room*	Often upstairs. Same word translated *the inn* Luke 2:7.

Bible Connections

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

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

Study 91 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	*reclined*	Passover was always eaten reclining, i.e. leaning on left elbow and eating with right hand.
16	*Kingdom of God*	The unchallenged rule of God. (Until Jesus came, most Jews thought it would start when the Messiah was crowned in Jerusalem.)
17,20	*the cup*	The Passover meal included four cups of wine.
20	*covenant*	a promise/binding agreement between parties
22	*Son of Man*	OT title Jesus used of himself, stressing his humanity

Bible connections

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

Study 92 Luke 22:24-38

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 happen-ing 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).' (New Bible Dictionary)
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

Study 93 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	*Mount of Olives*	small range of four hills; the highest (830m) overlooks south Jerusalem from the East, across the Kidron valley.
40	*temptation*	*i.e.* temptation to sin, *or* a time of severe testing/ordeal
42	*this cup*	In Old Testament, a 'cup' is linked to suffering and God's wrath.
43	*angel*	from Greek word *angelos,* meaning messenger
44	*agony*	Greek *agonia* - the only time this word occurs in New Testament.

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-52; John 18:1-14

42	… *this cup* ….	*see* Isaiah 51:17,22; Jeremiah 49:12; Ezekiel 23:33
	doing the Father's will	*see* Psalm 40:8, Isaiah 50:5; John 6:38
42-44	Jesus was made sin for us.	*see* 2 Corinthians 5:21
43	Angel strengthening Jesus	*see* Matthew 4:11; Mark 1:13

Study 94 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	*Judas*	One of Jesus' twelve particular followers. *See* note on p9
	…to kiss him	A form of greeting with a hand on each shoulder, especially to a teacher, expressing friendship and esteem
48	*Son of Man*	The title Jesus often used of himself, stressing His humanity.
50	*one of them*	John 18:10 tells us it was Peter.
	high priest	Singular, usually refers to president of the Sanhedrin – the Jewish supreme court.
52	*chief priests*	Plural, *i.e.* leading men among the priests.
	temple guard	The Temple police.
	elders	Lay members of the Sanhedrin.
53	*hour*	Particular or opportune time for something *cf* John 12:27.
54	*seized*	The verb used does not necessarily imply violence.
59	*Galilean*	*i.e.* 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

Study 95 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, then 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	*council*	The Sanhedrin (supreme court of the Jews)
67	*Christ*	Greek, *Christos,* means Hebrew, *Messiah* = Anointed One
69	*Son of Man*	Ambiguous title Jesus called himself, to stress his humanity; but OT also uses it of the Messiah (Daniel 7:13).
	seated	Posture of rest, having completed his saving work
	right hand	Place of honour
70	*the Son of God*	Indicating Jesus' special relationship to God (John 5:18)
23:1	*whole council*	Sanhedrin / council traditionally of 70 (Numbers 10:16)
	Pilate	The Roman governor of Judea, AD 26-36
3	*you*	Emphatic; it's an incredulous question
5	*Galilee*	Northern area around Sea of Galilee

7	*Herod*	Herod Antipas (son of Herod the Great) 4 BC – 39 AD
11	*elegant robe*	Greek *lampros* 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'

Study 96 Luke 23:13-25

'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	*Barabbas*	The name means 'son of the father'.
22	*crime* (NIV)	Greek *evil* (ESV)
	insurrection	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

Study 97 Luke 23:26-43

Be assured: Jesus receives all who repent

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	*Cyrene*	N. African port with a Jewish settlement; now *Tripoli.*
28	*daughters of Jerusalem*	*i.e.* City dwellers, not from Galilee
31	*when tree is green…dry*	perhaps a proverbial saying, *meaning,* 'If this is the fate of someone innocent, how much worse will be the fate of the guilty?'
33	*skull*	Latin *calvaria* which gives us 'Calvary'. Reason for the name is not known.
34	*divided…lots*	An accepted perk for the executioners; *see* John 19:23.
36	*wine vinegar*	*i.e.* Cheap /sour wine.
39	*save*	Greek *sozo,* = save or heal (18:42; 19:10).
40	'*Don't you fear God?'*	Means, 'Do you not fear even God?'
42	*come…kingdom*	*or* come with your kingly power.
43	*Paradise*	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. Also,

29-30 *children are a blessing* *see* Psalm 127:3

30 *Death is better than the coming wrath.* *see* Hosea 10:8

31 *when tree is green* *see* Ezekiel 20:47

34 *Father forgive them.* *see* Matthew 5:44; Acts 7:59

35 '*If you are the Son of God…'* *see* Luke 4:9

43 *Paradise* *see* Revelation 2:7

Study 98 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	*sixth hour*	Noon. The twelve daylight 'hours' varied in length with the seasons, but the sixth hour was always midday. From the 3rd hour (Mark 15:25) to 9th was 6 hours on the cross.
	darkness	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	*curtain*	See above.
46	*breathed his last*	Greek *exepneusen*, not the normal word for dying, but Dr Luke is precisely correct for death by crucifixion.
47	*centurion*	Senior soldier, commanding about 100 men, in charge of execution
48	*beat their breasts*	A sign of grief
49	*acquaintances*	(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	*curtain torn in two*	*c.f.* Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38 *torn from top to bottom.*
	Jesus opened the way to God:	*see* Hebrews 9:7-8; 10:19-22
46	*'into your hands…'*	*see* Psalm 31:5

Study 99 Luke 23:50-56

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 *Joseph* — Means '*may He add*' (Genesis 30:24)

Council — The Sanhedrin (the supreme court of the Jews)

Arimathea — Means 'city of the Jews'

righteous — Greek *dikaios* – same word as 'innocent' (47)

53 *Jesus wrapped in linen* — On the Day of Atonement, Aaron/the high priest wore 'holy linen garments' to enter Most Holy Place in Temple. (Leviticus 16:4, 32)

in which no-one had yet been laid — Rock tombs *could* be re-used; this was new.

54 *Preparation Day* — *i.e.* Friday, the day before the Sabbath. It was used for doing work forbidden on Sabbath, *eg* cooking.

Sabbath — The Jewish holy day, when no work was done (Exodus 20:8ff) sundown (*c* 6pm) Friday to sundown Saturday

56 *spices, perfumes* — Customary to put these between the graveclothes.

Bible connections

51 *'waiting for the kingdom…'* — *see* Matthew 27:57; John 19:38

55 *the women* — Luke 8:2-3; 23:49; 24:1, 9-11, 22-23; Acts 1:14

Study 100 Luke 24:1-12

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 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

Study 101 Luke 24:13-35

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

Bible Connections

See also John 1:45; 1 Corinthians 15:3-7

21 *redemption by his blood* *see* Rom 3:24; Gal 3:13; Eph 1:7; Heb 9:15

27 *in all the Scriptures* The whole OT from Genesis (3:15) to Malachi (3:1)
See also e.g. Deuteronomy 19:15; Isaiah 7:14, 9:6, 40:9-11, 53:1-12

Study 102 Luke 24:36-49

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 c3km 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

Study 103 Luke 24:50-53

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

Bible connections

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

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