

Luke

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Summary: *Luke 1 opens with a formal literary prologue addressed to Theophilus, establishing Luke's method as careful, orderly investigation. The chapter then narrates two angelic birth announcements: Gabriel appears first to the priest Zechariah in the temple, declaring that his elderly wife Elizabeth will bear a son named John who will prepare the way of the Lord; then Gabriel appears to the virgin Mary in Nazareth, announcing that she will conceive by the Holy Spirit and bear a son named Jesus who will reign over David's throne forever. Mary visits Elizabeth, and the unborn John leaps in the womb. The chapter contains four major poetic passages: the Magnificat (Mary's song, vv. 46-55), the Benedictus (Zechariah's prophecy, vv. 68-79), and shorter hymnic passages in the angelic announcements.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke's birth narratives are saturated with Old Testament echoes. Zechariah and Elizabeth recall Abraham and Sarah (aged, barren, promised a child). Gabriel's appearance in the temple connects to Daniel 8-9, where Gabriel also delivers prophetic messages about God's timing. Mary's Magnificat draws heavily on Hannah's prayer (1 Samuel 2:1-10), and Zechariah's Benedictus weaves together Davidic, Abrahamic, and prophetic covenant themes. The Greek in these hymnic sections is heavily Septuagintal — Luke appears to be deliberately imitating the style of the Greek Old Testament to signal that God's ancient promises are being fulfilled.*

Translation Friction: *The Greek of the prologue (vv. 1-4) is polished literary Koine, while the birth narratives shift to a markedly Semitic style, possibly reflecting Hebrew or Aramaic sources. We render both registers in natural modern English without flattening the distinction entirely. The Magnificat and Benedictus are rendered as poetry, preserving their hymnic structure. The phrase 'highly favored one' (kecharitomene, v. 28) has significant theological weight in different Christian traditions; we render the Greek transparently and note the range of meaning.*

Connections: *The Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12, 15, 17) is explicitly invoked in both the Magnificat (v. 55) and Benedictus (vv. 72-73). The Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7) underlies Gabriel's promise to Mary (vv. 32-33). John's role as forerunner connects to Malachi 3:1 and 4:5-6 (Elijah's return). The priestly setting of Zechariah's vision connects to the temple theology of the Old Testament.*

¹Since many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events that have been fulfilled among us, ²Indeed as they handed down them to us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word. ³Indeed, it was decided by me

also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you in order, most excellent Theophilus,. 4 Indeed, that you mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein you have been instructed. 5In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. His wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6They were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. 7But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. 8Now while Zechariah was serving as priest before God during his division's turn of duty, 9In keeping with to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he traveled into the temple of the Lord. 10And the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering. 11Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. 12Zechariah was shaken when he saw him, and fear overwhelmed him. 13But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to name him John. 14He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15For he will be great before the Lord, and he must never drink wine or strong drink. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, 16Numerous of the children of Israel will he turn to the Lord their God. 17He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers toward their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous — to prepare a people made ready for the Lord." 18Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure of this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." 19The angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God. I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. 20Now listen: you will be silent and unable to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled at their proper time." 21Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the sanctuary. 22When he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak. 23When the days of his priestly service were completed, he went home. 24After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and she kept herself in seclusion for five months, saying, 25"This is what the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my disgrace among people." 26Named nazareth,, and in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee. 27To a young woman pledged in marriage to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. 28The angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." 29But she was deeply troubled by his words and was wondering what kind of greeting this could be. 30The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31Listen: you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. 32He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. 33He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." 34Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I have not been intimate with a man?" 35The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. 36And listen — your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age. This is the sixth month for her who was called barren. 37For nothing will be impossible with God." 38Mary said, "Here I am, the servant of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. 39In those days Mary set out and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah, 40Went into into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. 41When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42She exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43And why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44For the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped for joy in my womb. 45Blessed is she who believed that what was spoken to her from the Lord would be fulfilled."

46And Mary said:

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

47My spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48Since he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden — for, take notice, from henceforth all generations will call me blessed. 49Since he that is mighty has done to me remarkable things. And holy is his name.

⁵⁰His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵²He has brought down rulers from their thrones
and lifted up the humble.

⁵³He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵As he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his descendants for ever. ⁵⁶Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned to her home. ⁵⁷Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. ⁵⁹On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. ⁶⁰But his mother answered, "No! He is to be called John." ⁶¹They said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who has that name." ⁶²Then they made signs to his father, asking what he wanted the child to be named. ⁶³He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And everyone was amazed. ⁶⁴Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue was freed, and he began to speak, praising God. ⁶⁵Fear came upon all their neighbors, and throughout the entire hill country of Judea, all these events were being discussed. ⁶⁶All who heard these things stored them in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child become?" For the hand of the Lord was with him. ⁶⁷Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

⁶⁸"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people.

⁶⁹He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,

⁷⁰As he spoke by the lips of his sacred God's spokespersons, which have been since the world began. ⁷¹That we should be saved from our opponents, and from the hand of all that despise us. ⁷²To perform the compassion promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant. ⁷³Indeed, the oath which he swore to our Father Abraham, ⁷⁴That he would grant to us, that we while delivered out of the possession of our enemies may serve him without be afraid. ⁷⁵In holiness and righteousness prior to him, every one of the days of our life.

⁷⁶And you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

⁷⁷To give knowledge of salvation to his those present by the remission of their sins, ⁷⁸By way of the tender mercy of our God. Whereby the dayspring from on high has visited us, ⁷⁹To provide radiance to them that take a seat in the dark and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. ⁸⁰The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The Greek *epecheiresan* ('have undertaken, have attempted') carries no negative connotation — Luke is not criticizing earlier efforts but acknowledging them. The verb *peplerophoremenon* ('fulfilled, accomplished, brought to completion') is stronger than the KJV's 'believed.' Luke views these events not merely as things believed but as things God has brought to fulfillment.

2. The Greek *autoptai* ('eyewitnesses') is a technical term — the root gives us the English 'autopsy' (seeing for oneself). Luke distinguishes himself from these original witnesses; he is a second-generation recipient. The phrase *hyperetai tou logou* ('servants of the word') may refer to a recognized role in the early church — those who faithfully transmitted the tradition.
3. The Greek *parekolouthokoti* ('having followed closely, having investigated') implies active research, not passive reception — Luke has traced the tradition back to its sources. The adverb *akribos* ('accurately, carefully') emphasizes methodological rigor. *Kratiste* ('most excellent') is an honorific used for Roman officials (cf. Acts 23:26, 24:3, 26:25), suggesting Theophilus held some social status, though whether this is a real person or a symbolic name ('lover of God') is debated.
4. The Greek *asphaleia* ('certainty, security, reliability') suggests Theophilus has already received oral instruction (*katechetes*, 'been catechized, been taught') and Luke writes to provide a firm foundation. The verb *katecheo* is the root of 'catechism' — formal instruction in the faith.
5. The shift from polished literary Greek (vv. 1-4) to Septuagintal narrative style is immediate — *egeneto* ('it came about') echoes the Hebrew *vayyehi*. Zechariah's priestly division of Abijah was the eighth of twenty-four divisions (1 Chronicles 24:10). That Elizabeth is also of Aaronic descent means John will be of fully priestly lineage on both sides. Herod the Great reigned 37-4 BC, anchoring the narrative historically.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 1 Chronicles 24:10 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
6. The Greek *dikaioi* ('righteous') and *amemptoi* ('blameless') together describe covenant faithfulness — not sinless perfection but faithful observance of the Torah. The distinction between *entolais* ('commandments') and *dikaiomasin* ('regulations, ordinances') may reflect the Torah's own distinction between different categories of law. This description echoes the characterization of Noah (Genesis 6:9) and Job (Job 1:1).
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 6:9. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Job 1:1. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
7. The barren-wife motif is one of the most significant patterns in the Old Testament: Sarah (Genesis 11:30), Rebekah (Genesis 25:21), Rachel (Genesis 29:31), the mother of Samson (Judges 13:2), and Hannah (1 Samuel 1:2). Luke signals that God is about to act in the same pattern — impossible circumstances overcome by divine intervention. The phrase *probebekotes en tais hemerais* ('advanced in their days') echoes the Septuagint description of Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 18:11).
7. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 11:30. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
7. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 25:21. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
7. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 29:31. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
7. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Judges 13:2. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
7. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 1 Samuel 1:2. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
7. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 18:11. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
8. Each priestly division served in the temple for one week, twice per year (plus the three pilgrimage festivals). The Greek *hierateuein* ('to serve as priest') is a technical term for performing temple duties. Luke places the divine encounter in the context of ordinary, faithful service.
9. The incense offering was performed on the golden altar in the Holy Place (Exodus 30:1-8), not in the Holy of Holies. The Greek *naon* ('sanctuary, inner temple') is distinguished from *hieron* ('temple complex'). Being chosen by lot for this duty was a once-in-a-lifetime honor for most priests, given the large number of priests and the twice-daily offering.
9. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 30:1-8. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
10. The incense offering coincided with the time of prayer (cf. Psalm 141:2, 'Let my prayer rise as incense before you'). The people waited outside in the Court of Israel while the priest performed the rite inside. This public context heightens the significance of what Zechariah is about to experience privately.
10. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Psalm 141:2 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
11. The right side is the position of favor and honor in biblical symbolism (cf. Psalm 110:1). The Greek *ophthe* ('appeared') is a divine passive — the angel was made visible by God's will. The altar of incense stood before the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (Exodus 30:6).

11. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Psalm 110:1. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
11. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Exodus 30:6. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
12. The verb *etarachthe* ('was troubled, was disturbed') indicates deep agitation, not mild surprise. The phrase *phobos epepesen* ('fear fell upon') is a Septuagintal expression for the terrifying impact of divine encounter (cf. Genesis 15:12, where 'a deep dread fell upon Abram'). Fear in the presence of the divine is a consistent biblical response.
12. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 15:12. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
13. The phrase *me phobou* ('do not be afraid') is the standard divine reassurance formula (cf. Genesis 15:1, Isaiah 41:10). The name *Ioannes* (John) is the Greek form of Hebrew *Yochanan*, meaning 'the LORD is gracious.' The passive *eisekousthe* ('has been heard') implies God is the one who has heard — divine response to persistent prayer.
13. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Genesis 15:1 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
13. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 41:10 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
14. The Greek *chara* ('joy') and *agalliasis* ('exultation, great gladness') form an intensifying pair. *Agalliasis* is a stronger term used frequently in the Septuagint Psalms for worship-level joy. The promise that 'many will rejoice' extends beyond the family to a national scope — John's birth is not just personal good news but Israel-wide good news.
15. The prohibition against wine and strong drink (*sikera*, from the Hebrew *shekar*) echoes the Nazirite vow (Numbers 6:3) and the instructions for Samson's mother (Judges 13:4-5). John is set apart for God's service from before birth. The phrase 'filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb' is extraordinary — prophetic endowment before birth, which will be demonstrated when Elizabeth's womb leaps at Mary's greeting (v. 41).
15. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Numbers 6:3 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
15. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Judges 13:4-5 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
16. The verb *epistrepsei* ('will turn') is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *shuv* — the central verb of repentance and return. John's mission is one of turning Israel back to their covenant God. The phrase 'children of Israel' (*huion Israel*) is deliberately archaic, evoking the Old Testament covenant identity.
17. This is a direct allusion to Malachi 4:5-6, the final prophecy of the Old Testament: 'I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the LORD, and he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children.' Gabriel identifies John as the fulfillment of this four-hundred-year-old promise. The phrase 'spirit and power of Elijah' does not mean John is Elijah reincarnated but that he operates in the same prophetic tradition and with the same empowerment.
17. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Malachi 4:5-6. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
18. Zechariah's question *kata ti gnosomai touto* ('by what will I know this?') closely echoes Abraham's question in Genesis 15:8 (LXX: *kata ti gnosomai*). Yet Abraham's question was met with a covenant ceremony, while Zechariah's is met with rebuke — perhaps because Zechariah asks after receiving angelic revelation inside the temple, a context that should have compelled faith rather than doubt.
18. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Genesis 15:8 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
19. Gabriel's self-identification is both a rebuke and a credential: 'I stand in the presence of God' — the one doubting is speaking to someone who has come directly from God's throne room. Gabriel appears in the Old Testament only in Daniel 8:16 and 9:21, both times delivering prophetic revelation about God's eschatological timing. The verb *euangelisasthai* ('to bring good news') is the root of 'gospel' — this birth announcement is gospel proclamation.
19. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Daniel 8:16. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
20. The Greek *idou* ('look, listen') introduces the consequence of disbelief. Zechariah's muteness is both sign and discipline — he asked for a sign and received one, though not the kind he wanted. The phrase *eis ton kairon auton* ('at their proper time') uses *kairos*, the Greek word for an appointed or decisive moment, not merely chronological time (*chronos*). God's timing is purposeful.
21. The incense ritual was brief; prolonged absence would cause concern. The verb *ethaumazon* ('were wondering, were amazed') carries a note of unease — the congregation senses something unusual has occurred. The imperfect tense suggests ongoing, growing wonder.

- 22.** The Greek *kophos* can mean 'deaf' or 'mute' or both. The context (v. 62 suggests he is also deaf, since they make signs to him) indicates both senses may be intended. The verb *dianeouon* ('making signs, gesturing') paints a vivid scene of the frustrated priest trying to communicate what has happened. The people immediately recognize the signs of a prophetic vision — this was part of Israel's religious memory even after centuries without prophets.
- 23.** The Greek *leitourgias* ('service, ministry') is a technical term for priestly duty — it gives us the English 'liturgy.' Zechariah faithfully completes his week of temple service despite his muteness before returning home, presumably to the hill country of Judea (cf. v. 39).
- 24.** Elizabeth's five months of seclusion is unique to Luke and its purpose is debated. Possible reasons include: pious devotion and prayer during the miraculous pregnancy, avoidance of public scrutiny until the pregnancy was unmistakable, or simply a narrative device that allows the sixth month to align with Gabriel's visit to Mary (v. 26). The verb *periekryben* ('hid herself, kept in seclusion') is intensive.
- 25.** Elizabeth's words echo Rachel's response to the birth of Joseph: 'God has taken away my reproach' (Genesis 30:23). Barrenness in the ancient world was a social stigma and was often interpreted as a sign of divine disfavor. The Greek *oneidos* ('reproach, disgrace') carries the weight of public shame. God's intervention removes not just the biological condition but the social stigma.
- 25.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Genesis 30:23 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 26.** The sixth month refers to the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, linking the two birth narratives. The scene shifts dramatically from the Jerusalem temple (center of Israel's worship) to Nazareth (an obscure village in Galilee, never mentioned in the Old Testament). This contrast is theologically significant — God's decisive act comes not in the religious capital but in an insignificant town.
- 27.** Luke repeats *parthenos* ('virgin') twice in one verse, emphasizing Mary's virginal status. The phrase *ex oikou Dauid* ('of the house of David') most naturally modifies Joseph, establishing the Davidic lineage through which Jesus will be the legal heir to David's throne. The name *Mariam* is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Miriam*.
- 28.** The Greek *kecharitomene* ('favored one, graced one') is a perfect passive participle of *charitoo* ('to bestow grace upon'). It indicates Mary has been and continues to be the recipient of God's grace. The Latin Vulgate rendered this *gratia plena* ('full of grace'), which shaped Catholic theology of Mary. The Greek itself simply indicates that God has graciously chosen her for this role. The KJV addition 'blessed art thou among women' is not in the earliest manuscripts of this verse (it appears in v. 42 from Elizabeth's mouth) and is omitted in the SBLGNT.
- 29.** The verb *dietarachthe* ('was deeply troubled, was thoroughly perplexed') is an intensified form — stronger than Zechariah's *tarachthe* in v. 12. Notably, Mary is troubled not by the angel's appearance but by his words (*epi to logo*). She is pondering the theological significance of the greeting, not merely frightened. The imperfect *diologizeto* ('was considering, kept wondering') suggests extended reflection.
- 30.** The phrase 'found favor with God' (*heures charin para to theo*) echoes the Old Testament idiom used of Noah (Genesis 6:8), Moses (Exodus 33:12-17), and others whom God chose for significant roles. The word *charis* ('favor, grace') connects to *kecharitomene* in v. 28 — the same grace-root appears in both the angel's greeting and his reassurance.
- 30.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Genesis 6:8 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 30.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 33:12-17 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 31.** The announcement follows the pattern of Old Testament birth oracles: conception, birth, naming (cf. Genesis 16:11, Isaiah 7:14, Judges 13:3-5). The name *Iesous* (Jesus) is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Yeshua* ('the LORD saves'). The verb *kaleseis* ('you will call') — the naming is given to Mary, not to Joseph as in Matthew 1:21, though both parents are involved in the naming.
- 31.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 16:11. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 31.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 7:14. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 31.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Judges 13:3-5. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 32.** The title 'Son of the Most High' (*huios hypsistou*) draws on the divine sonship language of the Davidic covenant: 'I will be his father, and he shall be my son' (2 Samuel 7:14). 'Most High' (*hypsistos*) is a title for God used frequently in the Psalms (Psalm 7:17, 9:2, 21:7, 46:4, 47:2, 50:14). The promise of 'the throne of David his father' directly invokes the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7:12-16 — an eternal dynasty that many believed had been interrupted by the exile.
- 32.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 2 Samuel 7:14. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 32.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Psalm 7:17. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.

- 33.** The phrase *eis tous aionas* ('into the ages, forever') echoes the 'forever' (*olam*) language of the Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7:13, 16). 'The house of Jacob' uses the patriarch's name for Israel, emphasizing covenant continuity. The declaration 'of his kingdom there will be no end' echoes Daniel 7:14, where the Son of Man receives 'an everlasting dominion that will not pass away.' Gabriel's language weaves together Davidic and Danielic messianic expectations.
- 33.** [TCR Cross-Reference] References 2 Samuel 7:13 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
- 33.** [TCR Cross-Reference] References Daniel 7:14 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
- 34.** Mary's question differs crucially from Zechariah's (v. 18). Zechariah asked 'How can I be sure?' (requesting proof); Mary asks 'How will this happen?' (requesting understanding of the mechanism). The phrase *andra ou ginoko* ('I do not know a man') uses *ginoko* in its sexual sense, corresponding to the Hebrew *yada*. Unlike Zechariah, Mary is not rebuked — her question is met with explanation rather than punishment.
- 35.** The verb *episkiazei* ('will overshadow') recalls the cloud of God's presence overshadowing the tabernacle (Exodus 40:35, LXX uses the same verb). The language is theophanic, not sexual — God's creative, sheltering presence will bring about the conception. The parallel structure ('Holy Spirit / power of the Most High') is synonymous parallelism, a Hebrew poetic device. 'Son of God' (*huios theou*) here moves beyond the Davidic covenant title of v. 32 to a more direct claim about divine origin.
- 35.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 40:35 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 36.** The Greek *sygenesis* ('relative, kinswoman') does not specify the exact relationship — the KJV's 'cousin' is too specific. This kinship between Mary and Elizabeth creates a connection between the priestly family (Elizabeth, descendant of Aaron) and the Davidic family (Mary, through Joseph's lineage). Elizabeth's pregnancy serves as a confirmatory sign for Mary, though Mary did not ask for one.
- 37.** This echoes Genesis 18:14 (LXX), where God says to Abraham regarding Sarah's promised pregnancy: 'Is anything impossible with God?' The Greek *rhema* ('word, thing, matter') carries the double sense of both 'word' and 'deed' — God's word and God's act are one. What God speaks, he accomplishes.
- 37.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 18:14. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 38.** Mary's response *doile kyriou* ('servant/slave of the Lord') is a title of honor in the Old Testament — Moses, David, and the prophets are called 'servants of the LORD.' The optative *genoito* ('let it be, may it happen') expresses willing consent, not passive resignation. Mary actively submits to God's plan. Her response contrasts sharply with Zechariah's doubt — she accepts the impossible on the basis of God's word alone.
- 39.** The Greek *meta spoudes* ('with haste, with urgency') suggests eagerness rather than anxiety — Mary rushes to see the sign Gabriel mentioned. The hill country of Judah is south of Jerusalem, a journey of roughly 80-100 miles from Nazareth in Galilee, requiring several days of travel. The traditional identification is Ein Karem, west of Jerusalem.
- 40.** The verb *espasato* ('greeted') is a standard greeting verb, but in context it triggers the extraordinary response of vv. 41-45. Mary's greeting becomes the catalyst for prophetic revelation — the sound of her voice causes the Spirit-filled response in both the unborn John and his mother.
- 41.** The verb *eskirtesen* ('leaped, jumped for joy') is used in the Septuagint for joyful leaping (cf. Malachi 4:2, Genesis 25:22). This fulfills the angel's promise that John would be 'filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb' (v. 15). The unborn John's response to the presence of the unborn Jesus is Luke's first indication of Jesus's significance — recognized even before birth.
- 41.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Malachi 4:2. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 41.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 25:22. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 42.** The verb *anepphonesen* ('cried out, exclaimed') with *krauge megale* ('a great shout') indicates Spirit-empowered prophetic speech, not casual conversation. 'Blessed among women' (*eulogemene su en gynaixin*) echoes the praise given to Jael in Judges 5:24 — a woman who played a decisive role in God's deliverance of Israel. 'Fruit of the womb' is a Semitic idiom for a child (cf. Deuteronomy 7:13, 28:4).
- 42.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Judges 5:24. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 42.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Deuteronomy 7:13. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 43.** Elizabeth's question *pothen moi touto* ('from where is this to me?') echoes David's response when the ark of the covenant was brought to him: 'How can the ark of the Lord come to me?' (2 Samuel 6:9). The parallel suggests that Mary, carrying Jesus, is analogous to the ark carrying God's presence. The title 'my Lord' (*tou kyriou mou*) applied to the unborn Jesus is a remarkable christological confession — Elizabeth recognizes the child Mary carries as her Lord.

43. [TCR Cross-Reference] References 2 Samuel 6:9 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
44. Elizabeth interprets her baby's movement as joyful recognition — *eskirtesen en agalliasei* ('leaped with exultation'). The word *agalliasis* ('exultation, great joy') is the same term used in v. 14 for the joy John would bring. John's prophetic role — pointing to Jesus — begins in the womb.
45. The Greek *makaria* ('blessed, happy, fortunate') pronounces a blessing on Mary's faith. The contrast with Zechariah's unbelief (v. 20) is implicit — Mary believed and is blessed; Zechariah doubted and was struck mute. The noun *teleiosis* ('fulfillment, completion, accomplishment') emphasizes that God's words will reach their intended completion.
46. The Magnificat (vv. 46-55) is traditionally named from the Latin translation of *megalynēi* ('magnifies'). This hymn draws extensively on Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2:1-10, which also celebrated God's reversal of the powerful and the lowly. 'My soul magnifies' means 'my whole being declares the greatness of' — the verb *megalyno* means to make great, to enlarge, to declare the greatness of someone.
46. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Samuel 2:1-10. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
47. The parallel 'my soul / my spirit' is synonymous parallelism — Hebrew poetic form in Greek garb. The aorist *egalliasev* ('rejoiced') alongside the present *megalynēi* ('magnifies') may express a past moment of joy that continues into the present. 'God my Savior' (to *theo* to *soteri mou*) echoes Habakkuk 3:18 and Psalm 24:5 (LXX). Mary identifies God specifically as her Savior.
47. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
47. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Habakkuk 3:18. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
47. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Psalm 24:5. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
48. The Greek *tapeinosin* ('humble state, low position') echoes Hannah's prayer — God attends to the lowly. Mary's self-designation as *doule* ('servant, slave') repeats her response in v. 38. The prophecy 'all generations will call me blessed' (*makariouein me pasai hai geneai*) has been remarkably fulfilled across two millennia of Christian tradition.
48. [TCR Cross-Reference] References 1 Samuel 2:1-10 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
49. The title *ho dynatos* ('the Mighty One, the Powerful One') echoes Zephaniah 3:17 and Psalm 24:8. 'Holy is his name' (*hagion to onoma autou*) echoes Psalm 111:9 (LXX). The structure shifts from personal testimony (what God has done for me) to universal declaration (God's character and actions in history).
49. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 1 Samuel 2:1-10. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
49. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Zephaniah 3:17. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
49. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Psalm 24:8. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
49. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Psalm 111:9. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
50. The Greek *eleos* ('mercy') here corresponds to the Hebrew *chesed* in the Septuagint tradition, though the Magnificat uses the simpler term rather than the full covenantal weight of *chesed*. 'Those who fear him' (*tois phoboumenois auton*) refers to reverent awe and covenant faithfulness, not terror. 'From generation to generation' (*eis geneas kai geneas*) echoes Psalm 103:17.
50. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 1 Samuel 2:1-10 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
50. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Psalm 103:17 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
51. The 'arm of the LORD' is a consistent Old Testament metaphor for divine power in action, especially in the Exodus (Exodus 6:6, Deuteronomy 4:34, Isaiah 51:9). The aorist tense *epoiesen* ('he has done') may be a 'prophetic aorist' — speaking of future divine acts as though already accomplished. 'Scattered the proud' (*dieskorpisen hyperephanous*) draws on the theme of God humbling the arrogant (cf. Psalm 89:10, Isaiah 2:12-17).
51. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Samuel 2:1-10. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
51. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Exodus 6:6. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
51. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Deuteronomy 4:34. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.

51. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 51:9. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
51. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Psalm 89:10. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
51. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 2:12-17. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
52. This is the central reversal theme of the Magnificat, directly paralleling Hannah's song: 'The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low, he also exalts' (1 Samuel 2:7). The Greek dynastas ('rulers, those in power') and tapeinous ('the lowly, the humble') form a deliberate contrast. Mary, a peasant girl from Nazareth, embodies the humble whom God exalts.
52. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
53. The reversal continues: hungry filled, rich emptied. This echoes 1 Samuel 2:5 ('those who were full hire themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry cease to hunger'). Luke's Gospel will develop this theme extensively — the Beatitudes (6:20-26), the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31), and Jesus's teaching on wealth throughout.
53. [TCR Cross-Reference] References 1 Samuel 2:1-10 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
54. The verb antelabeto ('has helped, has come to the aid of') implies taking someone by the hand to support them. Israel is called God's pais ('servant, child'), echoing Isaiah's servant language (Isaiah 41:8-9, 'you, Israel, my servant'). 'In remembrance of his mercy' (mnesthenai eleous) means God is acting because he remembers his covenant commitment — divine memory in the Old Testament is always linked to covenant action.
54. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 1 Samuel 2:1-10. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
54. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 41:8-9. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
55. The Magnificat concludes with explicit reference to the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:1-3, 17:7-8, 22:17-18). The Greek sperma ('seed, offspring') is the same term used in the Septuagint for the covenant promises to Abraham. Mary understands the child she carries as the fulfillment of promises made to Abraham — a covenant arc spanning two thousand years. The phrase eis ton aiona ('forever, into the age') corresponds to the Hebrew olam.
55. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 1 Samuel 2:1-10 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
55. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Genesis 12:1-3 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
56. Three months would bring Elizabeth to full term (she was in her sixth month when Mary arrived, v. 26). Luke does not explicitly state whether Mary was present for John's birth — the narrative leaves this ambiguous. The phrase hos menas treis ('about three months') with the approximating hos suggests Luke is reporting a round number rather than an exact duration.
57. The phrase eplesthe ho chronos ('the time was fulfilled') echoes Genesis 25:24 (Rebekah) and uses the language of fullness and completion — God's timing has reached its appointed moment. The narrative moves swiftly and simply, as is typical of biblical birth accounts.
57. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 25:24. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
58. The verb emegalynen ('had made great, had magnified') echoes Mary's megalynei ('magnifies') in v. 46 — the same root appears in the community's recognition of God's mercy toward Elizabeth. The Greek eleos ('mercy') again corresponds to the Hebrew chesed. The communal rejoicing fulfills the angel's promise in v. 14 that 'many will rejoice at his birth.'
59. Circumcision on the eighth day follows the command of Genesis 17:12 and Leviticus 12:3. The naming at circumcision was customary practice. The imperfect ekaloun ('they were calling, they were going to name') indicates an attempt that will be interrupted — the community assumed the child would follow the common pattern of being named after his father.
59. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Genesis 17:12. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
59. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Leviticus 12:3. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
60. Elizabeth's emphatic ouchi ('No!') and her knowledge of the divinely appointed name is striking — Zechariah has been mute and presumably unable to communicate the angel's instructions in detail. Whether she learned the name from Zechariah through written communication or through her own Spirit-filled insight (v. 41) is not stated. Her insistence overrides social convention.
61. The community's objection reveals the social expectation that names should stay within the family. The Greek syggeneia ('kindred, family, relatives') emphasizes the clan identity system. Naming a child outside the family's traditional names was unusual and would require explanation.
62. That they make signs (enenuon, 'were gesturing') to Zechariah rather than simply speaking to him suggests he was deaf as well as mute — the Greek kophos in v. 22 can mean both. This detail confirms that the affliction was comprehensive, making Zechariah's restoration all the more dramatic.

63. The Greek pinakidion ('writing tablet') was a small wax-coated board used for notes. Zechariah's written confirmation of Elizabeth's declaration — without any prior consultation possible given his deafness — demonstrates divine orchestration. His phrasing 'his name is John' (Ioannes estin onoma autou) uses the present tense 'is' rather than 'shall be,' indicating the name has already been divinely assigned.
64. The passive aneoiçthe ('was opened') indicates divine action — God removes the discipline at the moment of obedient faith. Zechariah's first words after months of silence are praise (eulogon ton theon, 'blessing God'). The verb elalei (imperfect, 'he was speaking, he began to speak') suggests continuous speech — the dam breaks and words pour out.
65. The 'fear' (phobos) that comes upon the community is reverential awe in the presence of the divine — the same response as Zechariah's in v. 12. The imperfect passive dielaletto ('were being discussed, were being talked about') indicates ongoing, widespread conversation. The phrase panta ta remata tauta ('all these words/events') uses rhema in its Semitic sense of both 'word' and 'event.'
66. The phrase ethento en te kardia auton ('placed in their hearts') echoes Mary's response in 2:19 and 2:51 — treasuring events in the heart is Luke's motif for those who are pondering God's actions. 'The hand of the Lord was with him' (cheir kyriou en met autou) is an Old Testament expression for divine empowerment and protection (cf. 1 Samuel 5:6, 2 Kings 3:15, Ezra 7:9).
66. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Samuel 5:6. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
66. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 2 Kings 3:15. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
66. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Ezra 7:9. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
67. Like Elizabeth (v. 41), Zechariah is filled with the Holy Spirit for prophetic speech. The verb epropheteusen ('prophesied') identifies the Benedictus (vv. 68-79) as Spirit-inspired prophecy, not merely personal praise. After months of enforced silence, Zechariah's first extended speech is prophetic proclamation.
68. The Benedictus (vv. 68-79) opens with a traditional Jewish blessing formula: eulogetos kyrios ('blessed be the Lord'), corresponding to the Hebrew baruk YHWH. The verb epeskepsato ('has visited') carries the sense of God paying attention, inspecting, and acting on behalf of his people (cf. Exodus 4:31, Ruth 1:6). The noun lytrosis ('redemption') is liberation through the payment of a ransom — language rooted in the Exodus and in the go'el (kinsman-redeemer) tradition.
68. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Psalms 41:13 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
68. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Exodus 4:31 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
68. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Ruth 1:6 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
69. The 'horn of salvation' (keras soterias) is a metaphor drawn from the powerful horns of animals — it signifies strength and power to save (cf. Psalm 18:2, 2 Samuel 22:3). 'In the house of David his servant' identifies this salvation as fulfillment of the Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7). Zechariah, a priest, celebrates God's act through the royal line — priestly and royal streams converge in this moment.
69. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Psalm 18:2. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
69. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 2 Samuel 22:3. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
69. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 2 Samuel 7. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
70. The phrase ap aionos ('from of old, from the age, since ancient times') emphasizes the long-standing nature of God's prophetic promises. The prophets are described as God's mouthpiece — 'through the mouth of' (dia stomatos) indicates that the words were God's, spoken through human agents. This is Luke's articulation of prophetic inspiration.
71. The language of salvation from enemies (soterian ex echthron) echoes the Psalms of deliverance (Psalm 18:3, 17; 106:10). In Zechariah's immediate context, the 'enemies' would include Roman occupation and Herodian oppression, but the Benedictus will soon reveal a deeper spiritual dimension to this salvation (v. 77). The phrase is deliberately broad enough to encompass both political and spiritual deliverance.
71. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Psalm 18:3. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
72. The Greek eleos ('mercy') here carries the force of the Hebrew chesed — covenantal mercy shown to the fathers. The Greek diathekes ('covenant') translates the Hebrew berit. The phrase 'remember his holy covenant' does not mean God had forgotten but that he is now acting on what he has always remembered — divine remembering is covenant activation (cf. Genesis 8:1, Exodus 2:24).
72. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 8:1. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.

72. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 2:24. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
73. The reference to God's oath (horkon) to Abraham points to Genesis 22:16-18, where God swears by himself (since there is no one greater to swear by) after the near-sacrifice of Isaac. This is the most solemn form of divine commitment in the Old Testament — an oath-bound covenant. The author of Hebrews will later develop this same point (Hebrews 6:13-18).
73. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Genesis 22:16-18 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
74. The verb *latreuein* ('to serve, to worship') is the Septuagint's standard term for priestly or liturgical service to God. The purpose of deliverance is not mere freedom but worship — Israel is rescued from enemies so that they can serve God. This echoes the Exodus pattern: 'Let my people go so that they may serve me' (Exodus 7:16, 8:1, 9:1). Rescue is the means; worship is the goal.
74. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 7:16. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
75. The pair *hosioteti kai dikaiosyne* ('holiness and righteousness') describes the complete character of covenant faithfulness — devotion toward God (holiness) and right conduct toward others (righteousness). The phrase 'all our days' (*pasais tais hemerais hemon*) envisions a lifelong pattern, not momentary piety.
76. Zechariah now turns from God's covenant faithfulness (vv. 68-75) to his own son's role. 'Prophet of the Most High' (*prophetes hypsistou*) parallels the title 'Son of the Most High' given to Jesus in v. 32. John's role is defined by the phrase from Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3 — the forerunner who prepares the way. The ambiguity of *kyrios* ('Lord') is significant — it could refer to God or to the Messiah. In context, it likely refers to Jesus, making Zechariah's prophecy a remarkable theological claim.
76. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Malachi 3:1. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
76. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 40:3. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
77. Here Zechariah redefines the 'salvation' he has been celebrating. After the martial language of vv. 71 and 74 (enemies, deliverance), the climactic definition is: salvation through forgiveness of sins (*en aphesei hamartion*). The Greek *aphesis* ('release, forgiveness, pardon') is the Septuagint word for the liberation of the Jubilee year (Leviticus 25:10) — forgiveness is portrayed as release from bondage.
77. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Leviticus 25:10. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
78. The Greek *splanchna eleous* ('bowels/depths of mercy') is intensely physical — *splanchna* refers to the internal organs, the seat of deepest emotion in ancient thought. The word *anatole* ('rising, dawn, dayspring') can mean either 'sunrise' or 'branch/shoot' (cf. Jeremiah 23:5, Zechariah 3:8, where the Hebrew *tsemach*, 'branch,' is rendered *anatole* in the Septuagint). The ambiguity may be intentional — the coming one is both the Messianic Branch and the dawning light.
78. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Jeremiah 23:5 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
78. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Zechariah 3:8 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
79. This verse echoes Isaiah 9:2 ('the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light') and Psalm 107:10 ('those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death'). The Greek *skia thanatou* ('shadow of death') translates the Hebrew *tsalmaveth*, the deep darkness of Sheol and despair. The *Benedictus* concludes with *eirene* ('peace'), corresponding to the Hebrew *shalom* — not merely absence of conflict but the fullness of well-being that comes when God's covenant purposes are fulfilled.
79. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 9:2. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
79. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Psalm 107:10. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
80. This summary verse parallels the growth notices for Samuel (1 Samuel 2:26) and will be echoed for Jesus (2:40, 52). The phrase *en tais eremois* ('in the wilderness areas') suggests John lived in the Judean desert, perhaps near the Dead Sea, before beginning his public ministry. The noun *anadeixeos* ('public appearance, showing forth, commissioning') occurs only here in the New Testament and suggests a formal appointment or public presentation — John's ministry did not begin gradually but with a definitive public emergence.
80. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 1 Samuel 2:26 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.

2

Summary: *Luke 2 narrates the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem during a Roman census under Augustus, the angelic announcement to shepherds, the presentation of the infant Jesus at the Jerusalem temple where Simeon and Anna recognize him as the promised Messiah, and a childhood episode where the twelve-year-old Jesus is found teaching in the temple. The chapter contains the Gloria in Excelsis (the angels' song, v. 14) and the Nunc Dimittis (Simeon's prayer, vv. 29-32), both rendered as poetry.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke alone sets the birth of Jesus within the framework of Roman imperial history — the census of Augustus becomes the mechanism by which Davidic prophecy is fulfilled (Micah 5:2). The announcement comes to shepherds, the lowest rung of society, not to priests or rulers. Simeon's Nunc Dimittis introduces the universal scope of salvation ('a light for revelation to the Gentiles') alongside its Jewish fulfillment ('glory for your people Israel'). Anna, one of only a few named female prophets in the Bible, confirms Simeon's testimony. The chapter ends with the only canonical account of Jesus's childhood.*

Translation Friction: *The census under Quirinius (v. 2) presents a well-known historical difficulty — Quirinius's known census occurred in AD 6, after Herod's death (4 BC). Scholars have proposed various solutions; we render the Greek as given without harmonizing. The phrase 'firstborn son' (v. 7) describes birth order, not a claim about subsequent children. The 'manger' (phatne) could refer to a feeding trough or an animal stall. We render transparently and note the range.*

Connections: *The Bethlehem birth fulfills Micah 5:2. The shepherds connect to David's own origins as a Bethlehem shepherd (1 Samuel 16). Simeon's language draws on Isaiah 42:6, 49:6 (light to the nations), and Isaiah 52:10 (salvation before all peoples). The temple presentation follows Exodus 13:2, 12 and Leviticus 12:1-8. Jesus in the temple at age twelve anticipates his adult ministry and echoes Samuel's temple childhood (1 Samuel 2-3).*

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole empire should be registered. ²This was the first registration, taken when Quirinius was governing Syria. ³So everyone went to be registered, each to his own city. ⁴Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, ⁵Indeed, to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being remarkable with child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷She gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in strips of cloth, and laid him in a feeding trough, because there was no room for them in the guest quarters. ⁸In that same region there were shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹An angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For today in the city of David a Savior has been born for you, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be the sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a feeding trough." ¹³And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the feeding trough. ¹⁷When they had seen this, they made known what had been told them about this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them. ²¹When eight days had passed and it was time for his circumcision, he was named Jesus — the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. ²²When the time required for her purification as the law of Moses required was completed, they brought him to Jerusalem, to dedicate him to the Lord; ²³(As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb will be known as holy to the Lord;). ²⁴Or two young pigeons, to offer a sacrifice

according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves. ²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, he came into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and blessed God, saying,

²⁹"Now, Master, you are releasing your servant in peace,
according to your word,

³⁰Because mine eyes have seen your salvation,. ³¹Which you have prepared before the face of all people. ³²A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of your those present Israel. ³³His father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "This child is destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed — ³⁵(Yea, a sword will pierce by way of your own soul also,) that the thoughts of numerous hearts may be revealed. ³⁶There was also a prophetess named Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very advanced in years, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, ³⁷She was a widow of concerning fourscore and four years, which departed not from the sanctuary, but served God with fastings and prayers after dark and time. ³⁸Coming up at that very hour, she began to give thanks to God and to speak about him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. ³⁹When they had completed everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him. ⁴¹His parents went to Jerusalem every year for the Festival of Passover. ⁴²When he was twelve years old, they went up according to the custom of the festival. ⁴³After the days of the festival were completed, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴Assuming he was in the caravan, they traveled a day's journey and then began looking for him among their relatives and acquaintances. ⁴⁵When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷All who heard him were astonished at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸When his parents saw him, they were overwhelmed. His mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." ⁴⁹He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them. And his mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵²And Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and people.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The Greek *oikoumene* ('the inhabited world') refers in practice to the Roman Empire. The verb *apographesthai* ('to be registered, to be enrolled') refers to a census for taxation purposes, not taxation itself — the KJV's 'taxed' is misleading. Luke frames the birth of the true King within the imperial machinery of a false one — Augustus claimed divine titles (son of god, savior, bringer of peace) that Luke will attribute to Jesus.
2. The Greek *haute apographe prote* ('this registration was the first') could also be rendered 'this registration took place before Quirinius was governing Syria' (taking *prote* as 'before' with a genitive absolute, as in John 15:18). The standard reading identifies this as the first of its kind under Quirinius. The historical difficulty — Quirinius's documented census was in AD 6-7, after Herod's death — remains unresolved among scholars. Luke may be referring to an earlier administrative role of Quirinius not otherwise attested.
3. Registration at one's ancestral city (rather than place of residence) reflects either a Jewish or Egyptian census practice — Roman censuses typically registered people where they lived. Luke presents this as the mechanism by which Joseph, a Galilean resident, must travel to Bethlehem, fulfilling the Davidic birthplace prophecy.
4. The verb *anebe* ('went up') is geographically literal — Bethlehem is at a higher elevation than Nazareth, and one always 'goes up' to Judea from Galilee. 'City of David' (*polin Daudid*) identifies Bethlehem as David's birthplace (1 Samuel 16:1, 17:12), distinct from Jerusalem, which is also called 'the city of David' (2 Samuel 5:7). Luke establishes Davidic lineage through Joseph, the legal father.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 1 Samuel 16:1. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 2 Samuel 5:7. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.

5. The Greek *emnesteuomene* ('pledged in marriage, betrothed') is the same term used in 1:27. Luke does not say 'his wife' here (some manuscripts add *gynaiki*, 'wife,' but the SBLGNT does not include it). The phrase *ouse enkuo* ('being pregnant') states the fact directly. The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem — approximately 80-90 miles — would have been arduous for a woman near full term.
6. The phrase *eplesthesan hai hemerai* ('the days were fulfilled') uses the same fullness-of-time language seen in 1:57 for Elizabeth. The narrative is compressed — Luke does not specify how long they had been in Bethlehem before the birth. God's timing moves through the machinery of Roman bureaucracy to fulfill ancient prophecy.
7. The Greek *prototokos* ('firstborn') is a legal and cultural designation indicating rights and status, not necessarily implying subsequent children. The verb *esparganosen* ('wrapped in swaddling bands') describes the ancient practice of tightly wrapping a newborn in strips of cloth. The Greek *phatne* ('manger, feeding trough') is where animals eat — the word itself emphasizes the humble circumstances. The Greek *katalyma* ('guest room, lodging') is not the word for a commercial inn (*pandocheion*, which Luke uses in 10:34); it likely refers to the guest room of a private home, which was already occupied.
8. The Greek *agraountes* ('living in the fields, camping out') indicates these shepherds were sleeping outdoors with their flocks, not merely working during the day. Shepherds occupied one of the lowest social positions — they were considered unreliable as legal witnesses and were often suspected of grazing their flocks on others' land. That God's announcement comes to them first is theologically significant for Luke's Gospel, which consistently elevates the lowly.
9. The verb *epeste* ('stood before, appeared suddenly') indicates a sudden, startling appearance. The 'glory of the Lord' (*doxa kyriou*) is the visible manifestation of God's presence — the same term used for the cloud that filled the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34) and Solomon's temple (1 Kings 8:11). The phrase *ephobethesav phobon megan* (literally 'they feared a great fear') is a Semitic intensifying construction indicating extreme terror.
9. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 40:34. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
9. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 1 Kings 8:11. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
10. The verb *euangelizomai* ('I bring good news, I announce gospel') is the same verb used of Gabriel's announcement to Zechariah (1:19). The 'great joy' (*charan megalen*) echoes the joy theme from chapter 1 (1:14, 44, 47). 'All the people' (*panti to lao*) in context refers primarily to Israel, though Luke's Gospel will extend this joy to all nations.
11. Three titles are stacked: *soter* ('Savior'), *christos* ('Christ/Messiah'), and *kyrios* ('Lord'). Each would have carried enormous weight. 'Savior' was a title used for Augustus Caesar; 'Christ' is the Greek form of Hebrew *mashiach*; 'Lord' (*kyrios*) is the Septuagint's standard rendering of YHWH. The combination 'Christ the Lord' (*christos kyrios*) is unique in the New Testament and may echo the Psalms of Solomon 17:32, a Jewish messianic text. The announcement to shepherds in the city of David is richly ironic — David was himself a shepherd from Bethlehem.
12. The 'sign' (*semeion*) is deliberately humble — not a cosmic portent but a baby in a feeding trough. The sign confirms the message by its very ordinariness combined with its specificity. The juxtaposition of the exalted titles (Savior, Christ, Lord) with the humble sign (a wrapped infant in an animal's feeding trough) is one of the most powerful contrasts in the New Testament.
13. The Greek *stratias ouraniou* ('heavenly army, heavenly host') is a military term — these are not gentle cherubs but the army of heaven. The same phrase is used in the Septuagint for the 'host of heaven' (*tseva hashamayim*) that surrounds God's throne. Their appearance 'suddenly' (*exaiphnes*) emphasizes the supernatural character of the event.
14. The Gloria in Excelsis is structured in two parallel lines: heaven/earth, God/humanity. The Greek *en anthropois eudokias* ('among people of [his] favor/good pleasure') follows the SBLGNT reading with the genitive *eudokias* rather than the nominative *eudokia*. This means 'among those whom God favors' rather than 'good will toward people.' The Dead Sea Scrolls use similar language — 'sons of his good pleasure' (*benei retsono*). 'Peace' (*eirene*) corresponds to the Hebrew *shalom* — the full vision of wholeness and flourishing that the Messiah brings.
15. The Greek *rhema* ('word, thing, event') again carries the dual meaning of word and event — what God has spoken has become an event they can go and see. The shepherds' immediate response echoes the pattern of faith-in-action seen in Mary (1:38) and Joseph (Matthew 1:24). The verb *egnorisen* ('has made known, has revealed') emphasizes that this is divine disclosure, not human discovery.
16. The verb *speusantes* ('having hurried') shows the urgency of their response — like Mary's haste to visit Elizabeth (1:39). The verb *aneuran* ('found, discovered after searching') suggests some effort was required to locate them. The order 'Mary and Joseph' places Mary first, consistent with Luke's emphasis on her role throughout the birth narrative.
17. The shepherds become the first evangelists — they 'made known' (*egnorisan*) the message, using the same verb used of God's disclosure to them (v. 15). The pattern is clear: God reveals, recipients believe, and believers proclaim. The shepherds are transformed from passive recipients of a message to active proclaimers of it.
18. The verb *ethaumasen* ('were amazed, were astonished') describes the natural response to extraordinary news. Luke frequently notes the amazement of crowds (cf. 1:63, 4:22, 8:25, 9:43, 11:14). The response is wonder but not yet faith — amazement is a starting point, not an endpoint.
19. The verb *syneterei* ('was keeping safe, was treasuring') implies careful preservation. The verb *syballousa* ('pondering, putting together, comparing') suggests active reflection — Mary is connecting the dots between Gabriel's announcement, Elizabeth's prophecy, and now the shepherds' report. This verse (and its parallel in v. 51) has been seen as a possible indication that Luke's source for the birth narrative was Mary herself.

- 20.** The phrase 'just as it had been told them' (*kathos elalethe pros autois*) confirms the exact fulfillment of the angelic sign — they found everything precisely as described. The shepherds' response of glorifying and praising God becomes a model for the proper response to encountering God's salvation in Luke's Gospel.
- 21.** As with John (1:59), circumcision and naming occur on the eighth day (Genesis 17:12, Leviticus 12:3). Luke emphasizes that the name was divinely given (through the angel, 1:31) before conception — the child's identity and mission were established before his existence. The name Iesous (Jesus/Yeshua, 'the LORD saves') is now formally conferred.
- 21.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 17:12. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 21.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Leviticus 12:3. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 22.** The SBLGNT reads *auton* ('their') rather than *autes* ('her'), though the purification ritual in Leviticus 12 applies specifically to the mother. Luke may use 'their' to include the family's broader obligation or to connect the purification with the presentation of the firstborn. The purification period for a male child was forty days (Leviticus 12:2-4). 'Present him to the Lord' reflects Exodus 13:2, 12 — every firstborn male belongs to God.
- 22.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Leviticus 12. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 22.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 13:2. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 23.** This quotation draws on Exodus 13:2, 12, 15. The phrase 'opens the womb' (*dianoigon metran*) is the standard biblical idiom for a firstborn child. The consecration of the firstborn to God commemorates the Passover, when God spared Israel's firstborn in Egypt. The irony for Luke's reader is rich — this child who is 'called holy to the Lord' is in fact the Lord's own Son.
- 23.** [TCR Cross-Reference] References Exodus 13:2 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
- 24.** The offering of birds rather than a lamb (Leviticus 12:8) is the provision for families too poor to afford the standard offering of a lamb plus a pigeon. This detail quietly establishes the family's economic status — Jesus is born into poverty. The same law that allows the poor person's offering is the one Mary and Joseph follow, and Luke notes it without comment.
- 24.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Leviticus 12:8. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 25.** Simeon is described with four characteristics: *dikaios* ('righteous' — covenant faithfulness), *eulabes* ('devout, reverent' — careful in religious observance), *prosdechomenos paraklesis tou Israel* ('waiting for the consolation of Israel' — messianic expectation), and Spirit-empowered. 'The consolation of Israel' (*paraklesis tou Israel*) draws on Isaiah 40:1 ('Comfort, comfort my people') — the promised end of exile and restoration of God's people.
- 25.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Isaiah 40:1 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 26.** The Greek *kechrematismenon* ('had been divinely warned, had received an oracle') is a technical term for divine communication, often through dreams or oracles. 'The Lord's Christ' (*ton christon kyriou*) corresponds to the Hebrew *mashiach YHWH* ('the LORD's anointed'), the specific title for the Davidic king chosen by God (cf. 1 Samuel 24:6, 26:9, 2 Samuel 1:14). Simeon has received a personal promise that he will live to see the Messiah.
- 26.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Samuel 24:6. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 26.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 2 Samuel 1:14. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 27.** The phrase *en to pneumati* ('in the Spirit, by the Spirit') indicates Spirit-directed action — Simeon did not come to the temple by coincidence but by divine leading. Luke calls Joseph and Mary 'the parents' (*tous goneis*), a natural designation that does not contradict the virgin birth but reflects the social and legal reality. The meeting appears coincidental but is orchestrated by the Spirit.
- 28.** The verb *edexato* ('received, took, welcomed') combined with 'into his arms' (*eis tas ankalas*) creates a tender image — an elderly man cradling a newborn. His first response is to bless God (*eulogesen ton theon*), not to bless the child, acknowledging that this moment is God's gift to him.
- 29.** The *Nunc Dimittis* (vv. 29-32), named from the Latin 'now you dismiss,' is Simeon's prayer of departure. The address *despota* ('Master, Sovereign') is stronger than *kyrios* — it implies absolute authority, as of a master over a slave. The verb *apolyeis* ('you are releasing, you are dismissing') uses language of freeing a slave or sentinel from duty. Simeon views his life as a watch that is now fulfilled — he can die in peace because he has seen what God promised.
- 30.** The Greek *soterion* ('salvation, saving act') is not abstract — Simeon has seen it embodied in a six-week-old infant. The phrase echoes Isaiah 52:10, 'All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.' What Simeon holds in his arms is what Isaiah prophesied the nations would witness.

- 30.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Isaiah 52:10 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 31.** The phrase *kata prosopon panton ton laon* ('before the face of all peoples') is crucial — the plural 'peoples' (*laon*) extends salvation beyond Israel to all nations. This universalism echoes Isaiah 52:10 and prepares for the explicit statement in the next verse. Simeon's horizon is not merely Jewish but global.
- 31.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 52:10. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 32.** The two parallel lines define salvation's dual scope: 'light for revelation to the Gentiles' (drawing on Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6, the Servant Songs) and 'glory to your people Israel.' The Greek *ethnon* ('nations, Gentiles') is placed first — a striking priority in a Jewish prayer. The 'light' imagery echoes Isaiah 9:2 and the *Benedictus* (1:78-79). Luke's Gospel will develop both dimensions — salvation for Israel and salvation for all nations.
- 32.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 42:6. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 32.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 9:2. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 33.** The SBLGNT reads *ho pater autou* ('his father') rather than 'Joseph,' which some manuscripts substitute to protect the doctrine of the virgin birth. Luke uses 'father' naturally to describe Joseph's social and legal role. The imperfect *thaumazontes* ('were amazed, kept marveling') suggests ongoing astonishment — each new revelation about their child adds to their wonder.
- 34.** After the joyful *Nunc Dimittis*, Simeon's tone darkens. The Greek *ptosin kai anastasin* ('falling and rising') indicates that this child will be a dividing figure — some will stumble and fall because of him, others will be raised up. The order (falling before rising) may be deliberate. 'A sign opposed' (*semeion antilegomenon*) foreshadows the rejection Jesus will face. Simeon addresses Mary specifically, not Joseph — the next verse will explain why.
- 35.** The Greek *rhomphaia* ('sword, large sword') is not the common *machaira* but a large, broad sword — the imagery is of devastating penetration. This is traditionally understood as a prophecy of Mary's suffering at the cross (John 19:25-27). The purpose clause 'so that thoughts of many hearts may be revealed' indicates that Jesus's ministry and its opposition will force people to reveal their true loyalties — he will expose what is hidden in human hearts.
- 36.** Anna (Greek form of the Hebrew Hannah) is one of the few women in the Bible explicitly called a 'prophetess' (*prophetis*), joining Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Deborah (Judges 4:4), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), and Isaiah's wife (Isaiah 8:3). Her tribe, Asher, was one of the ten 'lost' northern tribes — her presence in Jerusalem shows that not all Israelites of the northern tribes were lost. Luke provides remarkably detailed biographical information, emphasizing her as a credible witness.
- 36.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Exodus 15:20. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 36.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Judges 4:4. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 36.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 2 Kings 22:14. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 36.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 8:3. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 37.** The phrase *heos eton ogdoekonta tessaron* could mean 'a widow for eighty-four years' (making her about 105 years old) or 'a widow until the age of eighty-four.' Either reading depicts extraordinary longevity and devotion. 'Never left the temple' (*ouk aphistato tou hierou*) is likely a hyperbole for constant attendance rather than literal residence. Her worship of fasting and prayer 'night and day' identifies her as a living embodiment of the faithful remnant who waited for God's redemption.
- 38.** The phrase *aute te hora* ('at that very hour') emphasizes the providential timing — Anna arrives at precisely the right moment. The verb *anthomologeito* ('was giving thanks, was praising') is a compound form intensifying the thanksgiving. Those 'waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem' (*prosdechomenois lutrosin Ierousalem*) parallels those 'waiting for the consolation of Israel' (v. 25) — a circle of faithful Jews who held to the messianic hope. The noun *lutrosin* ('redemption') echoes Zechariah's *Benedictus* (1:68).
- 39.** Luke compresses the narrative significantly — Matthew's account includes the visit of the magi and the flight to Egypt between the temple presentation and the return to Nazareth. Luke does not mention these events, nor does he explicitly contradict them; he simply moves from one episode to the next. The emphasis on completing 'everything required by the law' (*panta ta kata ton nomon*) underscores the family's faithful Torah observance.
- 40.** This growth summary parallels the one for John (1:80) and echoes Samuel's growth (1 Samuel 2:26). The SBLGNT does not include 'in spirit' (*pneumati*), which appears in some manuscripts, likely imported from 1:80. The phrase 'filled with wisdom' (*pleroumenon sophia*) is distinctive — where John grew strong 'in spirit,' Jesus grows in 'wisdom.' The grace of God (*charis theou*) covering the child echoes the favored-one language of Mary's own calling (1:28).

40. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 1 Samuel 2:26 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
41. The Torah required all Israelite males to appear before the Lord three times a year: at Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (Exodus 23:14-17, Deuteronomy 16:16). That Mary also went reflects pious devotion beyond the legal minimum. The imperfect *eporeuonto* ('used to go, went regularly') indicates habitual practice.
41. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Exodus 23:14-17. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
41. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Deuteronomy 16:16. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
42. Age twelve was significant in Jewish tradition — it was the year before a boy assumed full responsibility for Torah observance (later formalized as *bar mitzvah* at thirteen). Luke may include this specific age to mark the transition from childhood to religious maturity, setting the stage for Jesus's remarkable interaction in the temple.
43. The Passover festival lasted seven days (Exodus 12:15). The verb *hupemeinen* ('stayed behind, remained') suggests a deliberate act on Jesus's part, not an accident. Large pilgrim caravans traveled together, and children could easily be assumed to be with other family members — the parents' ignorance is plausible and not negligent.
43. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Exodus 12:15 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
44. The Greek *synodia* ('caravan, traveling company') was the standard mode of pilgrimage travel — large groups from the same region would travel together for safety. A day's journey was roughly 20-25 miles. The search among relatives and acquaintances (*syggenesin kai tois gnostois*) reflects the extended family and community network that traveled together.
45. The return trip adds another day, meaning at least two full days pass before they find Jesus (a day's travel out, a day's travel back, then the search in Jerusalem on the third day, v. 46). The verb *anazetountes* ('searching for, seeking diligently') is intensive — this is an anxious, determined search.
46. The 'three days' (*meta hemeras treis*) may foreshadow the three days between crucifixion and resurrection — a pattern Luke's reader might notice retrospectively. The scene of a twelve-year-old 'sitting among the teachers' (*kathezomenon en meso ton didaskalon*) in the temple depicts the posture of a student in a rabbinical discussion. Jesus is both listening and asking — the ancient pedagogical method of learning through dialogue. The 'teachers' (*didaskalon*) were likely scribes and scholars who gathered in the temple courts.
47. The verb *existanto* ('were amazed, were astounded') is stronger than the earlier *ethaumasas* (v. 18) — it implies being beside oneself with astonishment. The combination of *synesis* ('understanding, comprehension, insight') and *apokriseis* ('answers, responses') shows Jesus was not merely asking precocious questions but demonstrating a depth of comprehension that stunned the scholars.
48. Mary's address *teknon* ('child') expresses both tenderness and maternal authority. The verb *odynomenoi* ('in distress, in anguish') is a strong word — the same root is used for the agony of the rich man in Hades (16:24-25). Mary's reference to 'your father' (*ho pater sou*) sets up Jesus's response, which will redefine the word 'father.'
49. These are the first recorded words of Jesus in Luke's Gospel. The phrase *en tois tou patros mou* ('in the things/house of my Father') is ambiguous — it can mean 'in my Father's house' (referring to the temple) or 'about my Father's affairs' (referring to his mission). Both meanings may be intended. The key theological move is the implicit correction of Mary's 'your father': Jesus distinguishes between Joseph ('your father,' v. 48) and God ('my Father'). The verb *dei* ('it is necessary, must') introduces Luke's theme of divine necessity — Jesus's life follows a divinely determined path.
50. The verb *synekan* ('understood, comprehended') indicates that even Mary and Joseph — who had received angelic revelations, heard Simeon's prophecy, and witnessed the shepherds' visit — did not fully grasp the implications of Jesus's words. Luke is honest about the gap between revelation received and revelation understood. Full understanding will come only later, in light of the resurrection.
51. The verb *hypotassomenos* ('being subject, being obedient') emphasizes that Jesus's extraordinary temple dialogue did not lead to rebellion against parental authority. The one who called God 'my Father' nevertheless submits to his earthly parents — a profound theological juxtaposition. Mary's treasuring (*dieterai*, 'was carefully keeping') echoes v. 19 and reinforces the sense that Luke's source may have been Mary's own recollections.
52. This closing summary echoes 1 Samuel 2:26 ('The boy Samuel continued to grow in stature and in favor with the LORD and with people'). The Greek *proekopten* ('was advancing, was progressing') implies steady development. The fourfold growth — wisdom (*sophia*), stature/age (*helikia*), favor with God (*chariti para theo*), favor with people (*anthropois*) — presents a fully human development. Luke's Gospel affirms both the divine identity and the genuine humanity of Jesus.
52. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 1 Samuel 2:26. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.

3

Summary: *Luke 3 opens with an elaborate sixfold dating formula placing John the Baptist's ministry in precise historical context. John preaches a baptism of repentance in the wilderness, quoting Isaiah 40:3-5 at length. He delivers practical ethical teaching to crowds, tax collectors, and soldiers, and announces the coming of one greater than himself who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. After Herod Antipas imprisons John, Luke narrates Jesus's baptism — the heavens open, the Spirit descends as a dove, and the Father's voice declares Jesus to be his beloved Son. The chapter concludes with Jesus's genealogy, traced backward from Joseph all the way to Adam and to God.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke's dating formula (vv. 1-2) is the most precise chronological anchor in the Gospels, naming the Roman emperor, the regional governor, three tetrarchs, and two high priests. The Isaiah quotation (vv. 4-6) extends beyond Matthew and Mark to include 'all flesh shall see the salvation of God' — characteristically Lukan universalism. John's practical ethics (vv. 10-14) are unique to Luke and reveal a prophet concerned not just with repentance but with social justice. Luke's genealogy runs backward (from Jesus to Adam to God), contrasting with Matthew's forward genealogy (from Abraham to Jesus), and extends to all humanity through Adam rather than stopping at Abraham.*

Translation Friction: *Luke's genealogy differs significantly from Matthew's from David onward — Matthew traces through Solomon, Luke through Nathan. Various harmonization theories exist; we render the Greek as given without harmonizing. The phrase 'as was supposed' (hos enomizeto, v. 23) guards the virgin birth while presenting Joseph's legal lineage. The genealogy counts roughly seventy-seven generations, possibly echoing the Enoch traditions or the seventy nations of Genesis 10.*

Connections: *Isaiah 40:3-5 (the voice in the wilderness) connects to the Exodus tradition of God preparing a way through the desert. John's call to repentance connects to the prophetic tradition of Elijah, Amos, and Micah. The baptism scene echoes Israel's crossing of the Jordan and the anointing of kings. The genealogy through Adam connects Jesus to all humanity and to the creation narrative of Genesis 1-5.*

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, ²Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the message of God arrived to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. ³He went into the entire region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴Indeed, as it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet of old and stated, The voice of one crying in the desert, Prepare you the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

⁵Every valley will be filled in,
and every mountain and hill will be made low.
The crooked will become straight,
and the rough paths will be made smooth.

⁶All flesh will see the salvation of God. ⁷He said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance. And do not begin saying to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. ⁹Even now the axe is laid at the root of the trees. Every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." ¹⁰The crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹He answered them, "Whoever has two tunics should share with the one who has none, and whoever has food should do the same." ¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³He said to them, "Collect no more than what you have been authorized to collect." ¹⁴So ldiars also asked him, "What should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusations, and be satisfied with your pay." ¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation and everyone was questioning in their hearts whether John might be the Christ, ¹⁶John answered them all, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more

powerful than I am coming. I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." ¹⁸So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people. ¹⁹But Herod the tetrarch, who had been rebuked by John concerning Herodias, his brother's wife, and concerning all the evil things Herod had done, ²⁰Indeed, added yet this above all, that he locked away John in prison. ²¹Now when all the people had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, ²²The Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice arrived from heaven, which stated, you are my Son, whom I love deeply. In you I am well pleased. ²³Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, ²⁴Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph,. ²⁵Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge,. ²⁶Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda,. ²⁷Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri,. ²⁸Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er,. ²⁹Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi,. ³⁰Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim,. ³¹Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David,. ³²Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson,. ³³Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda,. ³⁴Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor,. ³⁵Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala,. ³⁶Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech,. ³⁷Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan,. ³⁸Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. Luke's sixfold dating formula imitates the style of Old Testament prophetic introductions (cf. Isaiah 1:1, Jeremiah 1:1-3, Hosea 1:1) and Hellenistic historical writing. The fifteenth year of Tiberius would be approximately AD 28-29. The scope expands outward from the emperor to the local rulers, placing God's prophetic word within the structures of worldly power. 'Tetrarch' (tetraarchountos) literally means 'ruler of a quarter' — these were subordinate rulers under Roman authority.
1. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 1:1. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
1. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Jeremiah 1:1-3. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
1. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Hosea 1:1. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
2. Technically only one high priest served at a time; Caiaphas held the office officially (AD 18-36), but Annas, his father-in-law who had served earlier (AD 6-15), retained enormous influence (cf. John 18:13, Acts 4:6). Luke names both to reflect the political reality. The phrase *egeneto rhema theou epi Ioannen* ('the word of God came upon John') is a classic prophetic call formula — the same language used for Elijah (1 Kings 17:2), Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:4), and Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1:3). After centuries of prophetic silence, God speaks again.
2. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 1 Kings 17:2. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
2. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Jeremiah 1:4. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.

2. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Ezekiel 1:3. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
3. The phrase *baptisma metanoias* ('baptism of repentance') combines a ritual act (immersion in water) with its purpose (turning back to God). The Greek *metanoia* ('repentance, change of mind') corresponds to the Hebrew *teshuvah* — a turning, a return. 'For the forgiveness of sins' (*eis aphesin hamarton*) indicates the goal or result of this repentance-baptism. John's baptism is preparatory, pointing forward to the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit (v. 16).
4. The quotation is from Isaiah 40:3-5 (LXX). Luke quotes more of Isaiah than Matthew or Mark, extending to the universal climax in v. 6. In its original context, Isaiah 40 announced the end of Babylonian exile — God would make a highway through the desert to lead his people home. Luke sees John as the fulfillment of this prophetic voice. The 'way of the Lord' (*ten hodon kyriou*) in Isaiah refers to YHWH; Luke's application to Jesus carries a high christological claim.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 40:3-5. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
5. The imagery is of ancient road-building for a royal procession — filling valleys, leveling hills, straightening curves, and smoothing surfaces. The language operates on both literal and metaphorical levels: God is coming, and the landscape (both physical and spiritual) must be prepared. The reversal theme (valleys raised, mountains lowered) echoes the Magnificat's theme of the proud brought low and the humble lifted up (1:52).
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Isaiah 40:3-5 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
6. This final line of the Isaiah quotation is included only by Luke among the Synoptic Gospels. It is characteristically Lukan — 'all flesh' (*pasa sarx*) means all humanity, not just Israel. This universal vision connects to Simeon's prophecy (2:30-32) and anticipates the Gentile mission in Acts. The phrase *to soterion tou theou* ('the salvation of God') echoes Isaiah 52:10 and the Nunc Dimittis.
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 40:3-5. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 52:10. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
7. In Matthew 3:7, this denunciation is directed specifically at Pharisees and Sadducees; Luke directs it to 'the crowds' — a broader audience consistent with Luke's portrayal of John as a public preacher. 'Brood of vipers' (*gennemata echidnon*) is a devastating image — vipers fleeing a brush fire, scattering before the flames. The 'coming wrath' (*mellouses orges*) refers to eschatological judgment, which John sees as imminent.
8. The plural *karpous* ('fruits') in Luke (Matthew has the singular 'fruit') may emphasize the variety of righteous deeds expected. John attacks the presumption that ethnic descent from Abraham guarantees standing before God — a revolutionary claim that dismantles ethnic privilege. The wordplay between 'stones' (*lithon*) and 'children' (*tekna*) may reflect an Aramaic pun between *avanim* ('stones') and *banim* ('sons'), though the pun does not work in Greek.
9. The axe 'at the root' (*pros ten rhizan*) — not at the branches — indicates total destruction, not pruning. The present tenses *ekkoptetai* ('is being cut down') and *balletai* ('is being thrown') convey urgency: judgment is not merely future but already in process. The tree-and-fruit metaphor will recur throughout Luke's Gospel (6:43-44, 13:6-9).
10. This question — *ti oun poiesomen* ('what then should we do?') — will be asked three times (vv. 10, 12, 14), with each group receiving specific, practical instruction. This threefold dialogue is unique to Luke and reflects his characteristic interest in the practical outworking of repentance in daily life and social relationships.
11. The *chiton* ('tunic, inner garment') was a basic necessity, not a luxury. John is not asking for extraordinary sacrifice but for the sharing of essentials. The ethic is simple: if you have more than you need and your neighbor has less, share. This practical social ethic anticipates the economic themes that pervade Luke's Gospel (the rich fool, Lazarus and the rich man, Zacchaeus).
12. Tax collectors (*telonai*) were Jews who contracted with the Roman authorities to collect taxes, often extracting more than required and keeping the surplus. They were despised as collaborators and sinners. That they come to John for baptism is remarkable — Luke consistently shows tax collectors responding positively to God's message (5:27-32, 7:29, 15:1, 18:10-14, 19:1-10). Their address 'Teacher' (*didaskale*) shows respect for John's authority.
13. John does not tell the tax collectors to quit their profession — a surprising moderation. He calls them to practice their trade honestly. The Greek *diatetagmenon* ('what has been ordered, what has been appointed') refers to the official tax rate. The systemic corruption was not the tax itself but the overcharging. John's ethic addresses the specific temptation of each group.
14. The Greek *strateuomenoi* ('soldiers, those on military service') likely refers to Jewish soldiers serving under Herod Antipas rather than Roman legionaries. The verb *diaseiete* ('shake down, extort by intimidation') describes the common practice of soldiers using their power to extract money from civilians. The verb *sykophantesete* ('accuse falsely, blackmail') originally meant 'to inform on fig-smugglers' and came to mean malicious prosecution for personal gain. John again addresses the specific temptation of the group: abuse of power.
15. The verb *prosdokontos* ('were expecting, were in anticipation') indicates that messianic expectation was running high. The verb *dialogizomenon* ('were debating, were reasoning, were questioning') suggests internal deliberation. John's powerful preaching and moral authority raised the question that would require an explicit denial — was he the promised Messiah?

- 16.** John's contrast is stark: water versus Holy Spirit and fire. The sandal-strap image places John below even the lowest slave — untying a master's sandals was considered too degrading for a Jewish slave. The phrase *en pneumati hagio kai pyri* ('with the Holy Spirit and fire') is debated: does 'fire' refer to purifying judgment (v. 17), to the fire of Pentecost (Acts 2:3), or to both? The context of v. 17 suggests judgment, but Luke's later Pentecost narrative shows fulfillment in both senses.
- 17.** The winnowing fork (*ptyov*) was used to toss harvested grain into the air; the heavier grain fell back to the threshing floor while the lighter chaff blew away. The metaphor depicts thorough separation — the coming one will distinguish genuine repentance from superficial compliance. 'Unquenchable fire' (*pyri asbesto*) intensifies the judgment theme. This agricultural image would have been immediately vivid to John's rural audience.
- 18.** Luke's summary note is striking: even John's stern warnings about judgment constitute 'good news' (*euangelizeto*, 'he was gospeling'). The verb is the same one used for Gabriel's announcement to Zechariah (1:19) and the angel's announcement to the shepherds (2:10). Warning of judgment is gospel when it calls people to repentance and points them to the coming Savior.
- 19.** Luke narrates Herod's imprisonment of John before Jesus's baptism, which is a literary rather than strictly chronological arrangement — Luke wants to conclude John's ministry before beginning Jesus's. Herod Antipas had married Herodias, the wife of his half-brother (Herod Philip). John's rebuke (*elegchomenos*, 'being reprov'd, being exposed') was a prophetic confrontation of royal sin in the tradition of Nathan confronting David (2 Samuel 12) and Elijah confronting Ahab (1 Kings 21).
- 19.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 2 Samuel 12. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 19.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 1 Kings 21. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 20.** The verb *prosetheken* ('added') with *epi pasin* ('to all the rest, on top of everything') presents the imprisonment as the crowning act of Herod's wickedness. The verb *katekleisen* ('shut up, locked away') is emphatic. According to Josephus (*Antiquities* 18.5.2), John was imprisoned at the fortress of Machaerus east of the Dead Sea. Luke leaves the story here and does not narrate John's execution until it is reported later.
- 21.** Luke's account of Jesus's baptism is notably brief and places it after John's imprisonment narrative (vv. 19-20), so John is not explicitly present. Luke uniquely adds that Jesus was 'praying' (*proseuchomenou*) at the moment of the heavenly revelation — prayer at key moments is a distinctive Lukan theme (5:16, 6:12, 9:18, 9:28-29, 11:1, 22:41-44). The opening of the heavens (*aneochtenai ton ouranon*) signals divine communication breaking through the barrier between heaven and earth (cf. Ezekiel 1:1, Isaiah 64:1).
- 21.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Ezekiel 1:1. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 21.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 64:1. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 22.** Luke uniquely specifies *somatiko eidei* ('in bodily form') — the Spirit's descent was not merely a vision but a visible, physical manifestation. The heavenly voice combines Psalm 2:7 ('You are my Son') with Isaiah 42:1 ('my chosen, in whom my soul delights'), merging the royal Davidic identity with the Servant of the LORD. The second-person address 'You are' (*su ei*) makes this a personal declaration to Jesus, not merely an announcement to bystanders.
- 22.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Psalm 2:7. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 22.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 42:1. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 23.** The age of thirty echoes David's age when he began to reign (2 Samuel 5:4), Joseph's age when he entered Pharaoh's service (Genesis 41:46), and the age at which Levites began temple service (Numbers 4:3). The parenthetical *hos enomizeto* ('as was supposed, as was thought') guards the virgin birth — Joseph was the legal but not biological father. Luke's genealogy differs from Matthew's from David onward. Heli may be Mary's father, with the genealogy traced through her line, though this is debated.
- 23.** [TCR Cross-Reference] References 2 Samuel 5:4 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
- 23.** [TCR Cross-Reference] References Genesis 41:46 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
- 23.** [TCR Cross-Reference] References Numbers 4:3 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
- 24.** The genealogy from this point to David (v. 31) is largely unattested in Old Testament records, representing either a lesser-known branch of the Davidic family or sources no longer extant. The names are rendered in their standard English forms where recognizable.
- 25.** The names Amos and Nahum are shared with Old Testament prophets, though these are different individuals. Luke's genealogy contains several names with theophoric elements — names that incorporate references to God.
- 26.** The repetition of names like Mattathias and Joseph within the genealogy is common in Jewish naming practice — families frequently reused ancestral names across generations.

27. Zerubbabel and Shealtiel appear in both Matthew's and Luke's genealogies, though the surrounding names differ. In 1 Chronicles 3:17-19, Shealtiel is the son of Jeconiah, while Luke makes him the son of Neri. This is one of the key points where the two genealogies diverge. Zerubbabel led the return from exile and rebuilt the temple (Ezra 3-6).
27. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 1 Chronicles 3:17-19. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
27. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Ezra 3-6. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
28. These names span the exilic and post-exilic period. The name Er ('watchful') appears in Genesis 38:3 as Judah's firstborn, though this is obviously a different individual. Many of these names are otherwise unattested in surviving records.
28. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Genesis 38:3 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
29. The Greek Iesou here is the same name as Jesus (Yeshua/Joshua). This ancestor shares the name that means 'the LORD saves.' The name Eliezer ('my God is help') is prominent in the Old Testament as Abraham's servant (Genesis 15:2) and Moses's son (Exodus 18:4).
29. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Genesis 15:2. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
29. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 18:4. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
30. The names Simeon, Judah, and Joseph echo the great patriarchal names. Their recurrence in the genealogy reflects the enduring practice of naming children after the ancestral heroes of Israel.
31. Here is the decisive divergence from Matthew's genealogy: Luke traces the line through Nathan, a son of David (2 Samuel 5:14, 1 Chronicles 3:5), while Matthew traces through Solomon. Nathan was David's son by Bathsheba (1 Chronicles 3:5) but not a king. If Luke traces Mary's lineage, both parents descend from David but through different sons — Joseph through Solomon (the royal line) and Mary through Nathan (a non-royal branch).
31. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 2 Samuel 5:14. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
31. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Chronicles 3:5. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
32. From David back to Nahshon, Luke's genealogy matches Matthew's and the Old Testament records (Ruth 4:18-22, 1 Chronicles 2:10-15). These are the ancestors familiar from the book of Ruth: Boaz the kinsman-redeemer, Obed the son of Ruth and Boaz, Jesse the father of David. The genealogy passes through the key figures of God's covenant faithfulness.
32. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Ruth 4:18-22. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
32. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 1 Chronicles 2:10-15. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
33. The SBLGNT includes Admin and Arni between Amminadab and Hezron, where Matthew has only Ram/Aram. This reflects a textual tradition with additional generations. Perez was the son of Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38), the beginning of the line that leads to David. The genealogy anchors in the patriarchal period with Judah, son of Jacob.
33. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Genesis 38 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
34. The patriarchal triad — Jacob, Isaac, Abraham — forms the backbone of Israel's covenant identity. Where Matthew's genealogy begins with Abraham, Luke passes through Abraham and continues backward. Abraham's father Terah and grandfather Nahor take the line into the pre-Abrahamic period (Genesis 11:24-26). Luke's genealogy is about to move beyond the covenant people into universal human ancestry.
34. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Genesis 11:24-26. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
35. These names follow the genealogy of Genesis 11:10-26. Eber is traditionally considered the ancestor from whom the name 'Hebrew' derives. Peleg's name means 'division' — 'for in his days the earth was divided' (Genesis 10:25), traditionally associated with the Tower of Babel event.
35. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Genesis 11:10-26 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
36. Luke includes Cainan between Arphaxad and Shelah, following the Septuagint text of Genesis 10:24 and 11:12-13. The Hebrew Masoretic Text does not include this generation. Shem ('name') is the ancestor of the Semitic peoples. Noah, the survivor of the flood, marks the genealogy's passage through the great judgment-and-renewal event of Genesis 6-9.
36. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 10:24. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.

36. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 6-9. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
37. These names follow the genealogy of Genesis 5. Enoch is singled out in Genesis 5:24: 'Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.' Methuselah is traditionally the longest-lived person in the Bible (969 years, Genesis 5:27). These antediluvian figures connect Jesus to the earliest epochs of human history.
37. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 5. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
38. The genealogy reaches its theological climax: Adam, the son of God (*toû theou*). Where Matthew begins with Abraham (father of Israel), Luke ends with God (father of all humanity). This universal scope is characteristic of Luke's theology — Jesus is not only Israel's Messiah but the Savior of all humanity, descended from the first human whom God created. The phrase 'son of God' applied to Adam echoes Genesis 1:27 (created in God's image) and sets up a parallel with Jesus as 'Son of God' in a unique and ultimate sense. The genealogy thus frames Jesus's identity: he is both son of Adam (fully human, connected to all people) and Son of God (divinely begotten, announced by heaven).
38. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Genesis 1:27 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.

4

Summary: *Luke 4 narrates the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, his programmatic sermon at the Nazareth synagogue (reading from Isaiah 61), his rejection and near-execution by his hometown, and the beginning of his Galilean ministry with healings and exorcisms in Capernaum. The Nazareth sermon functions as Luke's thesis statement for Jesus's entire ministry — good news to the poor, freedom for captives, sight for the blind, liberty for the oppressed.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke reorders the temptations (compared to Matthew), placing the temple temptation last and ending in Jerusalem — the city where Jesus's ministry will climax. The Nazareth sermon is placed at the very beginning of Jesus's public ministry in Luke (though Mark and Matthew place similar events later), functioning as a programmatic declaration. Jesus's reference to Elijah's ministry to a Sidonian widow and Elisha's healing of a Syrian leper (vv. 25-27) provokes murderous rage by implying God's favor extends to Gentiles — a preview of the central tension in Luke-Acts.*

Translation Friction: *The chronological placement of the Nazareth episode differs across the Synoptics. Luke appears to have moved it forward for theological-literary purposes. The phrase 'Today this scripture is fulfilled' (v. 21) makes an extraordinary claim. The demons' recognition of Jesus (vv. 34, 41) and Jesus's silencing of them raises questions about the 'messianic secret' motif.*

Connections: *The temptation narrative recapitulates Israel's wilderness testing (Deuteronomy 6-8), with Jesus succeeding where Israel failed. The Isaiah 61 quotation connects to the Jubilee tradition (Leviticus 25) — the 'year of the Lord's favor' is a Jubilee proclamation. The Elijah and Elisha references (vv. 25-27) connect to 1 Kings 17 and 2 Kings 5 and anticipate Luke's Gentile mission theme.*

¹Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness ²Being forty days tempted of the devil. And at that time he did eat nothing — and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. ³The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." ⁴Jesus answered him, "It is written: 'A person shall not live by bread alone.'" ⁵Then the devil led him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in an instant of time. ⁶The devil said to him, "I will give you all this authority and their glory, for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to anyone I wish. ⁷So if you worship before me, it will all be yours." ⁸Jesus answered him, "It is written: 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.'" ⁹Then he led him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰Since it is written, He will give his angels charge over you, to keep you: ¹¹In their hands they will bear you up, lest at any time you dash your foot opposed to a stone. ¹²Jesus answered him, "It is said: 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ¹³When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time. ¹⁴Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him spread through the entire surrounding region. ¹⁵He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. ¹⁶He came to

Nazareth, where he had been raised. As was his custom, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read. ¹⁷The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free the oppressed,

¹⁹Indeed, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. ²⁰He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²²All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words coming from his mouth. They said, "Is this not Joseph's son?" ²³He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself.' 'What we heard you did in Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.'" ²⁴Then he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in his hometown. ²⁵But in truth I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut for three years and six months and a severe famine came over all the land, ²⁶However, to none of them was Elias dispatched, save to Sarepta, a city of Sidon, to a woman that was a widow. ²⁷And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, yet none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸Everyone in the synagogue was filled with rage when they heard this. ²⁹They rose up, drove him out of the city, and led him to the edge of the hill on which their city was built, so that they could throw him off the cliff. ³⁰But he passed through the middle of them and went on his way. ³¹He went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbath. ³²They were astonished at his teaching, because his word carried authority. ³³In the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴"Ha! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are — the Holy One of God!" ³⁵Jesus rebuked him: "Be silent and come out of him!" The demon threw the man down in the middle of them and came out of him without injuring him. ³⁶Amazement came over all of them, and they said to one another, "What is this word? He commands the unclean spirits with authority and power, and they come out!" ³⁷And reports about him went out to every place in the surrounding region. ³⁸He left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked him about her. ³⁹He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and began serving them. ⁴⁰As the sun was setting, all who had anyone sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on each one of them and healed them. ⁴¹Demons also came out of many people, crying out, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Christ. ⁴²At daybreak he went out to a deserted place. The crowds were searching for him, and when they came to him, they tried to keep him from leaving them. ⁴³But he said to them, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because that is why I was sent." ⁴⁴And he continued preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. Luke emphasizes the Spirit's role with two references in one verse: Jesus is 'full of' (pleres) the Spirit and 'led by' (egeto en) the Spirit. The wilderness (eremos) connects to Israel's forty years of testing and to John's wilderness ministry. The passive voice 'was led' indicates divine initiative — the Spirit directs Jesus into the place of testing.
2. The forty days echo Moses's forty days on Sinai (Exodus 34:28), Elijah's forty days to Horeb (1 Kings 19:8), and Israel's forty years in the wilderness. The Greek peirazomenos ('being tempted, being tested') uses the present participle, suggesting ongoing testing throughout the entire period, not just the three specific temptations. The Greek diabolos ('devil, slanderer, accuser') translates the Hebrew satan.
2. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 34:28. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
2. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 1 Kings 19:8. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.

3. The conditional *ei* ('if') is a first-class condition in Greek, not expressing doubt but assuming the premise: 'Since you are the Son of God...' The temptation is not about proving identity but about using divine power for personal comfort outside the Father's will. Luke has the singular 'stone' and 'bread' where Matthew has the plural — a minor variation. The temptation echoes Israel's demand for bread in the wilderness (Exodus 16).
3. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Exodus 16 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
4. Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3. The SBLGNT text ends the quotation at 'bread alone' without including the second half ('but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'), which appears in some manuscripts imported from Matthew 4:4. Jesus responds to each temptation exclusively with Scripture from Deuteronomy 6-8 — the very chapters about Israel's wilderness testing. Where Israel failed, Jesus succeeds by holding to God's word.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 8:3. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 6-8. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
5. Luke's order places this temptation second (Matthew places it third). The SBLGNT does not include 'to a high mountain' (which appears in Matthew and in some Luke manuscripts). The phrase *en stigme chronou* ('in a point/instant of time') is unique to Luke and suggests a supernatural vision rather than a physical vantage point. The Greek *oikoumenes* ('of the inhabited world') is the same term used for the Roman Empire in 2:1.
6. The devil's claim — that worldly authority 'has been handed over' (*paradedotai*) to him — is a theological assertion that Jesus does not dispute. The passive voice implies God permitted this transfer (cf. Job 1-2, where Satan operates within divine permission). The temptation offers a shortcut to universal rule without the cross. The Greek *exousia* ('authority, power') is the same word Jesus will use for his own authority throughout the Gospel.
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Job 1-2. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
7. The Greek *proskynesēs* ('worship, bow down before') is the verb used for worship of God throughout the Septuagint and New Testament. The devil demands the one thing that belongs exclusively to God — worship. This is the most direct and naked of the three temptations: it explicitly asks Jesus to transfer his allegiance from God to Satan in exchange for earthly power.
8. Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:13. The SBLGNT does not include 'Get behind me, Satan' (which appears in Matthew and some Luke manuscripts). The Deuteronomy passage is from the Shema context — the foundational confession of Israel's exclusive loyalty to God. The verb *latreusis* ('serve, render religious service') is the same verb used by Zechariah for the goal of redemption (1:74). Worship and service belong to God alone.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Deuteronomy 6:13 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
9. Luke places the temple temptation last (third), ending in Jerusalem — the city that will be the climax of Jesus's story. The Greek *pterygion* ('pinnacle, wing, highest point') of the temple may refer to the southeastern corner of the temple platform, which towered over the Kidron Valley. The temptation is to force God's hand — to compel a miraculous rescue that would prove sonship publicly.
10. The devil now quotes Scripture — Psalm 91:11-12. This is a psalm of divine protection for the righteous. The devil's use of Scripture demonstrates that quoting the Bible does not guarantee correct application. The citation is accurate but the application is twisted — Psalm 91 promises divine protection for those who trust God, not for those who recklessly test him.
10. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Psalms 91:11-12 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
11. The quotation from Psalm 91:12 continues. Notably, the devil omits the phrase 'in all your ways' from Psalm 91:11 — a significant omission that changes the meaning. The psalm promises protection for those walking in God's appointed ways, not for those deliberately seeking danger. The devil's exegesis is selective and misleading.
11. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Psalms 91:11-12. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
12. Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:16, which specifically references Israel's testing of God at Massah (Exodus 17:1-7), where Israel demanded that God prove himself. The verb *ekpeiraseis* ('test, put to the test') is stronger than the simple *peirazo* — it implies testing with the intent to provoke or to force God's hand. Jesus completes the Deuteronomy trilogy (8:3, 6:13, 6:16), demonstrating mastery of the very scriptures that defined Israel's failure.
12. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Deuteronomy 6:16. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
12. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 17:1-7. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
13. The phrase *achri kairou* ('until an opportune time, until the right moment') is ominous — the devil has not been defeated permanently but has withdrawn temporarily. Luke will identify the devil's return at 22:3, when Satan enters Judas. The word *kairos* ('opportune moment') rather than *chronos* ('duration of time') suggests the devil is watching for the strategically right moment to attack again.

14. The threefold Spirit reference in the temptation narrative (4:1a, 4:1b, 4:14) shows progression: full of the Spirit, led by the Spirit, returning in the power of the Spirit. Jesus emerges from the testing with the Spirit's power demonstrated and confirmed. The Greek pheme ('report, fame, rumor') indicates Jesus's reputation is already spreading before Luke narrates any specific ministry.
15. The imperfect edidasken ('was teaching, kept teaching') indicates ongoing activity across multiple synagogues. The verb doxazomenos ('being glorified, being praised') creates an ironic contrast with what is about to happen in Nazareth — universal praise will give way to murderous rejection. Luke sets up the Nazareth scene by first noting the positive reception elsewhere.
16. The phrase kata to ethos auto ('as was his custom') indicates Jesus had a regular practice of synagogue attendance — this was not his first visit as an adult. The phrase 'where he had been raised' (hou en tethrammenos) connects to the childhood narrative of chapter 2. Standing to read was the posture for reading Scripture; sitting was the posture for teaching (v. 20). Luke provides the most detailed description of a synagogue service in the New Testament.
17. The Greek biblion ('scroll, book') refers to a physical scroll; 'unrolled' (anaptuxas) is the literal action. Whether Jesus chose this passage or it was the assigned reading for that Sabbath is debated — the verb heuren ('found') could support either deliberate seeking or providential coincidence. The Isaiah scroll would have been one of the most prominent scrolls in any synagogue.
18. The quotation is from Isaiah 61:1-2 with a line from Isaiah 58:6 ('to set free the oppressed') inserted. The verb echrisen ('anointed') is the verbal root of Christos ('Christ/Anointed One') — Jesus reads a passage about anointing and will claim it as his own identity. 'Good news to the poor' (euangelisasthai ptochois) is Luke's signature theme. The four activities — good news to the poor, release to captives, sight to the blind, freedom for the oppressed — define Jesus's mission programmatically.
18. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 61:1-2 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
18. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 58:6 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
19. The 'year of the Lord's favor' (eniauton kyriou dektion) alludes to the Jubilee year (Leviticus 25), when debts were cancelled, slaves freed, and ancestral land returned. Isaiah 61 reinterprets the Jubilee eschatologically — the ultimate release, the final restoration. Critically, Jesus stops reading mid-verse. Isaiah 61:2 continues with 'and the day of vengeance of our God,' which Jesus deliberately omits. The omission is theologically significant — Jesus announces favor, not vengeance.
19. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 61:1-2. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
19. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Leviticus 25. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
20. Jesus sits down to teach — the seated posture of a rabbi delivering instruction. The verb atenizontes ('gazing intently, staring fixedly') conveys intense anticipation. The entire congregation senses that something significant is about to happen. The dramatic pause between sitting and speaking heightens the tension Luke is building.
21. The word semeron ('today') is one of the most important words in Luke's Gospel (cf. 2:11, 5:26, 19:5, 9, 23:43). It declares that the ancient prophecy has moved from promise to fulfillment in the present moment. The perfect tense peplerōtai ('has been fulfilled') indicates completed action with ongoing results — the fulfillment has happened and continues to be in effect. 'In your hearing' (en tois osin hymon, literally 'in your ears') emphasizes that they are eyewitnesses to the fulfillment event.
22. The initial reaction is positive — the congregation speaks well (emarturoun, 'bore witness, testified favorably') of Jesus and marvels at his 'words of grace' (logois tes charitos). But the question 'Is this not Joseph's son?' contains the seed of rejection: they know his ordinary origins and struggle to reconcile them with extraordinary claims. The shift from admiration to hostility (vv. 28-29) will be triggered by Jesus's own provocative words.
23. Jesus anticipates their demand — perform miracles here like you did in Capernaum. The proverb 'Physician, heal yourself' (iatre, therapeuson seauton) was a common ancient maxim meaning 'prove your claims on your own turf first.' This implies Jesus had already been active in Capernaum before the Nazareth visit, even though Luke places this scene first in his narrative — another indication of Luke's theological rather than strictly chronological arrangement.
24. The phrase amen lego hymin ('truly I tell you') is a solemn introductory formula unique to Jesus in the Gospels — no rabbi or prophet before him used 'amen' to introduce rather than conclude a statement. Jesus identifies himself as a prophet and simultaneously predicts his rejection. The word dektos ('accepted, welcome') echoes the 'acceptable year' (eniauton dektion) of v. 19 — the same root word. The year is acceptable; the prophet is not.
25. Jesus introduces two Old Testament precedents that will enrage his audience. The 'three years and six months' specification matches James 5:17 but exceeds the 1 Kings 18:1 reference to 'the third year.' The detail may come from Jewish tradition. The point is building: even in Elijah's day, God's prophet was rejected by Israel and sent instead to a Gentile.
25. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 1 Kings 18:1 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
26. The reference is to 1 Kings 17:8-24. Zarephath was in Phoenician territory — Gentile land. The scandalous implication is clear: God bypassed all the widows of Israel and sent his prophet to a Gentile woman. This is not just a historical anecdote but a prophetic pattern that Jesus is about to repeat — his ministry will extend beyond Israel's borders.

26. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Kings 17:8-24. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
27. The reference is to 2 Kings 5:1-14. Naaman was a commander of the Syrian army — not just a Gentile but an enemy military officer. Jesus's point is devastating: God's grace is not bound by ethnic boundaries, and when Israel rejects God's prophet, God sends that prophet's healing power to Israel's enemies. This is the statement that transforms admiration into rage (v. 28).
27. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 2 Kings 5:1-14. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
28. The verb *eplesthesan* ('were filled') is the same word used for being 'filled with the Holy Spirit' (1:15, 41, 67) — here the filling is with *thymos* ('rage, fury, wrath'). The transition from 'all spoke well of him' (v. 22) to 'all were filled with rage' is abrupt and total. The trigger is clear: Jesus's implication that God's grace extends to Gentiles, especially when Israel proves unfaithful.
29. The mob action — expulsion from the city and attempted execution — mirrors the pattern of rejected prophets. Nazareth sits on a ridge with steep slopes. The verb *katakremisai* ('to throw down a cliff, to hurl headlong') describes a form of execution. The attempt to kill Jesus at the very beginning of his ministry foreshadows the crucifixion — rejection by his own people leading to his death outside the city.
30. The manner of Jesus's escape is left unexplained — whether by natural means (the crowd's hesitation, his composure) or supernatural intervention. The brevity of the statement (seven Greek words) is striking after the dramatic buildup. Jesus is untouchable until his appointed hour (cf. John 7:30, 8:59). The verb *eporeueto* ('was going on his way') uses the imperfect, suggesting calm, deliberate movement — not panicked flight.
31. The verb *katelten* ('went down') is geographically accurate — Capernaum sits on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, significantly lower than Nazareth in the hills. Capernaum becomes Jesus's base of operations in Galilee, replacing the hometown that rejected him. The imperfect 'was teaching' (*en didaskon*) indicates regular, ongoing instruction.
32. The Greek *exousia* ('authority, power') is a key Lukan term. Unlike the scribes who taught by citing rabbinic precedent, Jesus taught with inherent authority — his word itself carried weight. The verb *exeplessonto* ('were astonished, were struck with amazement') indicates the teaching made a deep impact. The contrast with Nazareth is implicit: in Capernaum, Jesus's authority is recognized; in Nazareth, it was rejected.
33. Luke's phrase *pneuma daimoniou akathartou* ('spirit of an unclean demon') is fuller than Mark's 'unclean spirit.' The encounter takes place in the synagogue — the sacred space is not immune to demonic presence. The loud cry (*anekraxen phone megale*) disrupts the worship setting. Luke presents exorcism as a core component of Jesus's ministry alongside teaching.
34. The interjection *ea* ('ha!' or 'leave us alone!') expresses alarm. The phrase *ti hemin kai soi* ('what to us and to you?') is a Semitic idiom meaning 'what business do you have with us?' The demon uses the plural 'us' (*hemin, hemas*), possibly speaking for all demons. The title 'the Holy One of God' (*ho hagios tou theou*) is a correct identification — the demons know exactly who Jesus is. In the ancient world, knowing and speaking someone's name was believed to give power over them; the demon attempts to control Jesus by identifying him.
35. The verb *phimotheti* ('be muzzled, be silenced') is a strong command — the same verb used for muzzling an animal. Jesus refuses the demon's identification not because it is wrong but because the testimony of demons is not the appropriate source for revealing his identity. The detail 'without injuring him' (*meden blapsan auton*) shows Jesus's protective concern for the man even during the dramatic exorcism.
36. The Greek *thambos* ('amazement, astonishment, wonder') is a stronger reaction than the earlier 'astonishment' at his teaching (v. 32). The combination of *exousia* ('authority') and *dynamis* ('power') represents both the right and the ability to command — Jesus has both the divine authorization and the supernatural power to cast out demons. The crowd recognizes that teaching authority (v. 32) and power over demons (v. 36) are manifestations of the same *logos* ('word').
37. The Greek *echos* ('sound, report, echo') suggests the news reverberates outward like sound waves. The verb *exeporeueto* (imperfect, 'kept going out') indicates ongoing, expanding fame. This echoes the summary of v. 14 and shows the growing impact of Jesus's combined ministry of teaching and healing.
38. Luke introduces Simon (Peter) without prior explanation — the reader is assumed to know who Simon is, or Luke treats his first mention as sufficient introduction. Luke the physician uses medical language: *pyreto megalo* ('a great/high fever'). The verb *synechomene* ('held fast, gripped, suffering from') suggests the fever's oppressive hold on her. That 'they asked him about her' indicates the household's trust in Jesus's power to heal.
39. Luke uniquely describes Jesus rebuking (*epetimesen*) the fever — the same verb used for rebuking the demon (v. 35). This suggests Luke views the fever as having a spiritual dimension or at least shows Jesus exercising the same authority over disease as over demons. The immediate recovery (*parachrona*, 'at once') and her ability to serve (*diekonei*, 'was serving, was ministering') demonstrate the completeness of the healing — no recovery period needed.
40. The timing 'as the sun was setting' (*dynontos tou heliou*) marks the end of the Sabbath — people waited until the Sabbath restrictions on carrying burdens were lifted before bringing the sick. Luke uniquely notes that Jesus laid hands 'on each one' (*heni hekasto*) — individual, personal attention to every sick person, not a mass healing from a distance. This detail reflects Luke's interest in Jesus's compassionate engagement with individuals.
41. The demons' confession 'You are the Son of God' (*su ei ho huios tou theou*) is theologically correct but procedurally inappropriate. Jesus silences them (*ouk eia auta lalein*, 'he was not permitting them to speak') because the messianic identity must be revealed on God's timetable and through proper channels, not through demonic proclamation. Luke explains the reason plainly: 'because they knew he was the Christ' (*edeisan ton christon auton einai*).

42. Jesus's withdrawal to a 'deserted place' (eremon topon) for prayer is a Lukan pattern (5:16, 6:12, 9:18, 28). The verb *kateichon* ('were holding back, were restraining') is strong — the crowds physically tried to prevent him from leaving. Their desire to keep him reflects the attractiveness of his healing ministry, but Jesus will redirect their attention to the broader mission.
43. The verb *dei* ('it is necessary, I must') again expresses divine necessity — Jesus's mission is not self-determined but divinely appointed. The phrase *euangelisasthai ten basileian tou theou* ('to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God') is Luke's summary of Jesus's core message. 'The kingdom of God' (he *basileia tou theou*) is the central concept of Jesus's teaching — God's rule breaking into the present world. The passive *apestalen* ('I was sent') identifies Jesus as one sent by God, a prophetic self-understanding.
44. The SBLGNT reads 'Judea' (*Ioudaias*) rather than 'Galilee' (*Galilaias*, found in many manuscripts). Luke may use 'Judea' in the broader sense of 'the land of the Jews' (i.e., all of Palestine), which is attested elsewhere in Luke-Acts (cf. 6:17, 7:17, 23:5, Acts 10:37). The imperfect periphrastic *en kerisson* ('was preaching, continued preaching') emphasizes the ongoing nature of Jesus's synagogue ministry.

5

Summary: *Luke 5 narrates the miraculous catch of fish and the calling of Simon Peter, James, and John; the healing of a man with leprosy; the healing of a paralytic lowered through a roof (with Jesus's claim to forgive sins); the calling of the tax collector Levi and the banquet at his house; and a series of confrontations about fasting and new wine. The chapter establishes the pattern of Jesus's ministry: miraculous power, radical inclusion, and escalating conflict with religious authorities.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke's call of Peter is far more detailed than Mark's or Matthew's — it includes the miraculous catch that overwhelms professional fishermen and Peter's profound response: 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord.' This is a classic theophany response (cf. Isaiah 6:5). The paralytic story introduces the first explicit controversy about Jesus's authority to forgive sins — the Pharisees correctly identify this as a divine prerogative, which is precisely Jesus's point. Levi's banquet scandalizes the religious establishment by putting Jesus at table with 'sinners.'*

Translation Friction: *The chronological relationship between the call narratives in Luke 5 and those in Mark 1/Matthew 4 is debated — Luke places the call after a miracle, while Mark and Matthew place it as an immediate response to Jesus's command. The roof-opening scene differs between Mark ('dug through') and Luke ('through the tiles'), likely reflecting different audiences' familiarity with different building styles.*

Connections: *Peter's call echoes the prophetic call narratives (Isaiah 6, Jeremiah 1, Ezekiel 1-3) — encounter with the divine, awareness of unworthiness, commissioning for mission. The leper's cleansing fulfills the Isaiah 61 program (4:18-19). The paralytic scene raises the Christological question of divine authority. The new-wine parable points to the incompatibility of Jesus's movement with existing religious structures.*

¹Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret. ²He saw two boats moored at the edge of the lake; the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. ³He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water, and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵Simon answered, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing. But at your word, I will let down the nets." ⁶When they had done this, they enclosed such a large number of fish that their nets began to tear. ⁷They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came, and they filled both boats so full that they began to sink. ⁸When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus's knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord!" ⁹For astonishment had seized him and all who were with him at the catch of fish they had taken, ¹⁰James and John, Zebedee's sons and Simon's fishing partners, were equally amazed. But Jesus told Simon, "Don't be afraid. From now on, you will be catching people." ¹¹When they had brought the boats to shore, they left everything and followed him. ¹²While he was in one of the cities, there was a man covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." ¹³He stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing. Be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴He ordered him to tell no one: "Go, show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your cleansing that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." ¹⁵But the word about him spread even more, and large

crowds gathered to listen and to be healed of their illnesses. ¹⁶But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray. ¹⁷On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting nearby. They had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal. ¹⁸Then some men came carrying on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed, and they were trying to bring him in and set him before Jesus. ¹⁹Finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his stretcher through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. ²⁰When he saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you." ²¹The scribes and the Pharisees began to question this, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ²²But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, responded to them, "Why are you questioning in your hearts? ²³Which is easier to say: 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? ²⁴But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — he said to the paralyzed man — "I say to you, get up, pick up your stretcher, and go home." ²⁵Immediately he stood up before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. ²⁶ Astonishment seized all of them, and they glorified God. Filled with awe, they said, "We have seen extraordinary things today!" ²⁷ After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." ²⁸And leaving everything behind, he got up and followed him. ²⁹Then Levi hosted a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. ³⁰The Pharisees and their scribes complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ³²I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." ³³They said to him, "The disciples of John fast frequently and offer prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink." ³⁴Jesus said to them, "Can you make the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? ³⁵And then will they fast at that time, but the days will come, when the bridegroom will be taken away from them. ³⁶He also told them a parable: "No one tears a patch from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. Otherwise, the new garment would be torn, and the patch from the new would not match the old. ³⁷And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins — the wine will be spilled and the skins will be ruined. ³⁸Rather, new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. ³⁹And no one who drinks old wine wants new, for he says, 'The old is good enough.'"

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The 'lake of Gennesaret' is the Sea of Galilee, named here after the fertile plain on its northwestern shore. Luke consistently calls it a 'lake' (limne) rather than 'sea' (thalassa) as in Mark and Matthew — a more geographically precise term, as it is a freshwater lake. The crowd 'pressing in' (epikeisthai, 'pressing upon, crowding') demonstrates the intensity of the response to Jesus's teaching.
2. The 'boats' (ploia) were fishing boats typical of the Sea of Galilee — roughly 26 feet long based on archaeological finds. Washing nets after fishing was standard maintenance to remove debris and prevent rotting. The detail places the scene after an unsuccessful night of fishing (v. 5 will confirm this). The fishermen's ordinary work becomes the setting for an extraordinary encounter.
3. Jesus uses Simon's boat as a floating pulpit — the water would create a natural amphitheater for his voice to carry to the shore. He sits to teach (the posture of a rabbi, as in 4:20). This practical use of Simon's boat precedes the command that will change Simon's life. Jesus first enters Simon's ordinary world before calling him to an extraordinary one.
4. The shift from singular ('put out' — epanagage, addressed to Simon as captain) to plural ('let down your nets' — chalasate, addressed to the crew) is natural: Simon steers the boat; everyone lowers the nets. The command to fish in deep water during daylight contradicts professional fishing practice — Galilean fishermen worked at night in shallow water. Jesus, a carpenter, tells professional fishermen how to fish.
5. Simon's address epistata ('master, chief, commander') is a Lukan term (used six times in Luke, nowhere else in the NT) that acknowledges authority without necessarily implying belief in divinity. His statement 'we worked hard all night and caught nothing' (di holes nyktos kopiasantes ouden elabomen) establishes the futility of human effort. His willingness to obey 'at your word' (epi de to remati sou) despite professional judgment is the first step of faith.
6. The verb synekleisan ('enclosed, caught, trapped') emphasizes the overwhelming quantity. The imperfect dieresseto ('were tearing, began to tear') indicates the nets were in the process of breaking — an ongoing struggle with an impossible abundance. The catch exceeds what human equipment can contain. This is the pattern of divine provision: superabundance beyond expectation (cf. the feeding of the five thousand, 9:10-17).
7. The verb kateneusan ('beckoned, signaled') suggests they were too far from shore or too overwhelmed to shout. The partners (metochois) in the other boat are identified as James and John in v. 10. Two fully loaded fishing boats beginning to sink (bythizesthai, 'to be submerged') paints a vivid picture of abundance threatening to overwhelm. The miracle exceeds all practical capacity.

8. This is the first time Luke uses the full name 'Simon Peter' (Simon Petros). Peter's response is a classic theophany reaction — when Isaiah sees God's glory, he cries 'Woe to me! I am a man of unclean lips' (Isaiah 6:5). Peter recognizes that the miracle reveals divine presence and that divine holiness exposes human sinfulness. The address *kyrie* ('Lord') here carries more weight than *epistata* in v. 5 — Peter's understanding of who Jesus is has deepened in the space of one miracle.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 6:5 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
9. The verb *periaschen* ('had seized, had gripped, had surrounded') is a strong term — amazement doesn't just come upon them but seizes and encircles them. The reaction is collective — Peter, his crew, and everyone present is overwhelmed. These are professional fishermen who know what is natural and what is not.
10. James and John are introduced as business partners (*koinonoi*, 'partners, sharers') with Simon. Jesus's 'Do not be afraid' (*me phobou*) echoes the divine reassurance given to Abraham (Genesis 15:1), Moses (Numbers 21:34), and others who encounter God. The verb *zogron* ('catching alive, taking alive') means literally 'to capture alive' — used in the Septuagint for taking prisoners alive (cf. 2 Timothy 2:26). The metaphor transforms fishermen into rescuers of people.
10. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Genesis 15:1 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
10. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Numbers 21:34 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
11. The phrase *aphentes panta* ('having left everything') is radical — they abandon boats, nets, the miraculous catch itself, their livelihood. Luke emphasizes the totality of their response more than Mark's account. The verb *ekolouthēsan* ('followed') is the standard term for discipleship — it implies not just physical movement but life commitment. This is the first formal calling of disciples in Luke's narrative.
12. Luke intensifies Mark's description with *pleres lepras* ('full of, covered with leprosy'), indicating an advanced case. 'Leprosy' (*lepra*) in the Bible covers a range of skin diseases, not just modern Hansen's disease. The man's approach violates Levitical quarantine laws (Leviticus 13:45-46) — he should not be in the city or near people. His statement is remarkable theology: he has no doubt about Jesus's ability ('you can'), only about his willingness ('if you are willing'). He addresses Jesus as *kyrie* ('Lord').
12. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Leviticus 13:45-46. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
13. The touch (*hepsato*) is extraordinary — touching a leper made a person ritually unclean (Leviticus 13-14). Instead of Jesus becoming unclean through contact, the man becomes clean through Jesus's touch. The direction of contamination is reversed by Jesus's holiness. The command *katharisthēti* ('be cleansed') is an aorist passive imperative — a single, decisive act of cleansing. The response is instantaneous (*eutheos*, 'immediately').
13. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Leviticus 13-14 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
14. Jesus commands compliance with Leviticus 14:1-32 — the elaborate priestly ritual for certifying that a leper has been cleansed. This included examination by the priest, two birds, cedar wood, scarlet yarn, hyssop, and a series of offerings over eight days. The phrase *eis martyriōn autois* ('as a testimony to them') is ambiguous — testimony to the priests that a genuine healing has occurred, or testimony against them if they reject it. Jesus affirms the Mosaic law even while transcending it.
14. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Leviticus 14:1-32. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
15. Despite the command to silence, the report (*logos*, 'word') spreads 'even more' (*mallon*). The crowds come for two things: hearing (*akouein*) and healing (*therapeuesthai*) — the twin pillars of Jesus's ministry. Luke consistently presents teaching and healing as inseparable aspects of the kingdom's arrival.
16. The imperfect periphrastic *en hypochoron* ('was withdrawing, would withdraw') indicates habitual practice — this was Jesus's regular pattern, not a single event. The connection between ministry demands and prayerful withdrawal is a consistent Lukan theme. Jesus's power comes through dependence on the Father, maintained through regular prayer.
17. Luke uniquely notes that Pharisees and *nomodidaskaloi* ('teachers of the law, experts in Torah') had gathered from across the land — this is an official observation, not a casual visit. The phrase *dynamis kyriou en eis to iasthai auton* ('the power of the Lord was present for him to heal') is a distinctive Lukan note — the Lord's healing power is specifically present in this moment, suggesting that divine power operates in particular moments rather than as a constant, automatic capacity.
18. The Greek *paralelymenos* ('having been paralyzed') is a perfect passive participle indicating an established, ongoing condition. The verb *ezetoun* ('were seeking, were trying') shows persistent effort — they did not give up when access was blocked. Luke does not specify the number of carriers (Mark says four, Mark 2:3). Their faith-in-action — bringing the paralyzed man to Jesus despite obstacles — is about to be commended.
19. Luke says 'through the tiles' (*dia ton keramon*) where Mark says they 'dug through' the roof (Mark 2:4). Palestinian roofs were typically made of wooden beams covered with branches and packed earth, which could be dug through; Luke may be adapting the description for a Gentile audience familiar with tiled roofs. The Greek *klinidion* ('small bed, stretcher') is a diminutive, emphasizing the improvised nature of the arrangement.

20. Jesus sees 'their faith' (ten pistin auton) — the plural 'their' includes both the paralyzed man and his friends. Faith in this context is demonstrated through action, not verbal confession. The address anthropo ('man, friend') is a Lukan distinctive (cf. 12:14, 22:58, 60). The declaration apheontai soi hai hamartiai sou ('your sins have been forgiven you') is a divine passive — God is the implied agent of the forgiveness. Jesus speaks what only God can do.
21. The religious leaders' theological logic is impeccable: only God can forgive sins (cf. Isaiah 43:25, 'I, even I, am the one who blots out your transgressions'). Their conclusion — that Jesus is blaspheming by claiming a divine prerogative — is correct if Jesus is merely human. The question 'Who is this?' (tis estin houtos) is the central christological question of Luke's Gospel. Jesus will answer it not by withdrawing the claim but by demonstrating the authority behind it.
21. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 43:25. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
22. The verb epignous ('having known, having perceived') indicates supernatural knowledge of their internal reasoning — they have not spoken their objection aloud. Jesus knows their dialogismous ('thoughts, deliberations, reasonings'). This itself is a divine attribute (cf. 1 Kings 8:39, 'you alone know the hearts of all people'; Jeremiah 17:10, 'I the LORD search the heart').
22. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 1 Kings 8:39. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
22. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Jeremiah 17:10. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
23. The question is a rhetorical trap for the critics. To say 'your sins are forgiven' is easier because it cannot be verified or falsified — no one can see whether forgiveness has actually occurred. To say 'get up and walk' is harder because it can be immediately tested. Jesus will do the harder, verifiable thing to prove the authority behind the easier, invisible thing.
24. This is the first use of 'Son of Man' (ho huios tou anthropou) in Luke. The title draws on Daniel 7:13-14, where 'one like a son of man' receives authority, glory, and an everlasting kingdom from the Ancient of Days. Jesus claims that this heavenly authority operates 'on earth' (epi tes ges) — the divine prerogative of forgiveness is being exercised here and now. The sentence breaks mid-thought as Jesus turns from the critics to the patient — Luke preserves the dramatic pause.
24. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Daniel 7:13-14. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
25. The adverb parachrona ('immediately, at once') emphasizes the instantaneous nature of the healing. The man does exactly what Jesus commanded — stands, picks up the stretcher, goes home — demonstrating both the completeness of the healing and the authority of Jesus's word. His response of 'glorifying God' (doxazon ton theon) is the proper recognition that divine power has been at work.
26. The Greek ekstasis ('astonishment, amazement, ecstasy') is the root of the English 'ecstasy' — a state of being outside oneself with wonder. The crowd is simultaneously amazed, glorifying God, and filled with phobos ('fear, awe'). The word paradoxa ('extraordinary things, things contrary to expectation') gives us the English 'paradox' — they have witnessed things that defy normal categories. The word semeron ('today') echoes the programmatic 'today' of 4:21.
27. Levi (identified as Matthew in Matthew 9:9) is sitting at his telonion ('tax booth, toll station'), likely a customs post on a trade route near Capernaum. Tax collectors were despised as collaborators with Rome and presumed cheaters. Jesus's invitation 'Follow me' (akolouthei moi) is the same simple, authoritative command that called the fishermen. Jesus does not ask Levi to reform first and then follow — the call comes to him in the midst of his despised occupation.
28. Like the fishermen (v. 11), Levi leaves 'everything' (panta). For a tax collector, this means abandoning a lucrative position — unlike fishing, the tax-collection franchise could not be easily resumed once abandoned. The imperfect ekolouthei ('was following, began to follow') may indicate the beginning of ongoing discipleship.
29. Levi's response to his call is immediate hospitality — a 'great banquet' (dochen megalen) that introduces Jesus to Levi's social network. The verb katakeimenoi ('reclining') indicates a formal Greco-Roman banquet setting where diners reclined on couches. The guest list — tax collectors and 'others' (presumably those outside respectable society) — will provoke the criticism of v. 30. Table fellowship in the ancient world implied acceptance and social equality among the diners.
30. The verb egongyzon ('were grumbling, were complaining') is the same word used for Israel's grumbling against Moses in the wilderness (Exodus 15:24, 16:2 LXX) — Luke may be drawing the parallel. The complaint is directed at the disciples rather than at Jesus directly. 'Tax collectors and sinners' (telonon kai hamartolon) is a stock phrase for the socially and religiously marginalized. The offense is table fellowship — eating with someone implied approval and solidarity.
30. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 15:24 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
31. Jesus responds with a proverb that reframes the situation entirely. The Greek hugiainontes ('the healthy, those who are sound') and kakos echontes ('those having it badly, the sick') draw from medical vocabulary — fitting for Luke's audience. The proverb is both an explanation (I go where the need is) and a subtle challenge to the Pharisees (are you sure you're as healthy as you think?).

32. The verb *elelitha* ('I have come') implies purpose and mission — Jesus has come from somewhere (heaven) for a specific reason. The phrase *eis metanoian* ('to repentance') is added by Luke (Mark 2:17 lacks it), making the purpose explicit: Jesus seeks sinners not to condone their sin but to call them to transformation. Whether 'the righteous' (*dikaiois*) is said with irony (no one is truly righteous) or seriously (some are already in right relationship with God) is debated.
33. The complaint shifts from who Jesus eats with (v. 30) to the fact that his disciples eat at all rather than fasting. John's disciples and the Pharisees' disciples fasted 'frequently' (*pykna*) — the Pharisees fasted twice a week (Monday and Thursday, cf. 18:12). The contrast between fasting (religious austerity) and eating and drinking (celebration) sets up Jesus's response about the bridegroom.
34. The phrase *huios tou nymphonos* ('sons of the bridal chamber,' i.e., wedding guests, attendants of the bridegroom) is a Semitic idiom. The bridegroom image for God's relationship with his people has deep Old Testament roots (Isaiah 54:5, 62:5, Hosea 2:16-20). Jesus implicitly identifies himself as the bridegroom — a divine role. A wedding is a time of celebration, not fasting; Jesus's presence inaugurates a time of joy.
34. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 54:5. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
34. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Hosea 2:16-20. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
35. The verb *aparthē* ('will be taken away') is a violent term — it suggests forcible removal, not voluntary departure. This is the first oblique reference to Jesus's death in Luke's Gospel. The passive voice implies others will take him away. The future fasting 'in those days' (*en ekeinaiis tais hemeraiis*) points to the period after the crucifixion. The statement subtly moves from the present joy of Jesus's ministry to the future sorrow of his death.
36. Luke's version of the patch parable is more elaborate than Mark's. Luke uniquely adds that the new garment would be ruined by cutting it — double loss. The point is not simply that new and old are incompatible but that trying to combine them destroys both. Jesus's movement is not a patch on existing religious structures but something entirely new.
37. New wine continues to ferment and expand; old wineskins have lost their elasticity. The metaphor drives home the same point as the patch parable: Jesus's message and movement cannot be contained within the old structures. The 'new wine' represents the kingdom of God breaking in; the 'old wineskins' represent the existing religious frameworks. Both the wine (the message) and the skins (the structure) are lost if forced together.
38. The verbal adjective *bleteon* ('must be put') expresses necessity — this is not optional but required. The new reality Jesus brings demands new forms to contain it. Luke does not include 'and both are preserved' (found in some manuscripts), keeping the focus on the necessity of the new.
39. This verse is unique to Luke and adds a surprising coda. The Greek *chrestos* ('good, pleasant, useful') — some manuscripts read *chrestoteros* ('better') — describes the old wine's appeal. The saying acknowledges a psychological reality: people prefer what they're accustomed to. The religious establishment will not readily embrace the new because the old system seems satisfactory. This verse may express gentle irony about the Pharisees' resistance or may acknowledge that the transition from old covenant to new is genuinely difficult.

6

Summary: *Luke 6 contains two Sabbath controversies (grain-picking and healing a withered hand), the choosing of the Twelve apostles after a night of prayer, and the Sermon on the Plain — Luke's parallel to Matthew's Sermon on the Mount. The sermon includes four blessings and four woes, teaching on loving enemies, not judging, and the parable of the two foundations. This chapter establishes Jesus's ethical teaching and the formation of his core community.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke's Beatitudes differ significantly from Matthew's. Luke has four blessings and four corresponding woes (Matthew has eight/nine blessings and no woes). Luke's blessings are addressed in the second person ('Blessed are you who are poor') rather than Matthew's third person ('Blessed are the poor in spirit'). Luke's version appears more concrete and socioeconomic — 'poor' rather than 'poor in spirit,' 'hungry now' rather than 'hungry for righteousness.' The 'love your enemies' teaching (vv. 27-36) is the most radical ethical instruction in the Gospels.*

Translation Friction: *The relationship between Luke's Sermon on the Plain and Matthew's Sermon on the Mount is debated — whether they are different versions of the same event, different events with overlapping material, or literary compositions drawing on a common source. We render Luke's Greek text as given without harmonizing with Matthew.*

Connections: *The Sabbath controversies connect to Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15, with Jesus reinterpreting Sabbath in light of its original humanitarian purpose. The Beatitudes echo the Magnificat's reversal theme (1:46-55) and Hannah's prayer (1 Samuel 2:1-10). The 'love your enemies' teaching connects to Leviticus 19:18 while radically extending it. The two-foundations parable echoes Ezekiel 13:10-16 and Proverbs 10:25.*

¹On a Sabbath, as Jesus was passing through the grain fields, his disciples were picking heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands, and eating them. ²Some of the Pharisees said, "Why are you doing what is not permitted on the Sabbath?" ³Jesus answered them, "Have you not even read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? ⁴He entered the house of God, took the bread of the Presence and ate it, and gave some to his companions — bread that only the priests are permitted to eat." ⁵Then he said to them, "The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath." ⁶On another Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. A man was there whose right hand was withered. ⁷The scribes and the Pharisees were watching him closely to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find a charge to bring against him. ⁸But he knew their thoughts and said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and stand in the middle." He got up and stood there. ⁹Jesus said to them, "I ask you: is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to destroy it?" ¹⁰After looking around at all of them, he said to him, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was restored. ¹¹But they were filled with fury and began discussing with one another what they might do to Jesus. ¹²In those days he went out to the mountain to pray, and he spent the whole night in prayer to God. ¹³When day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: ¹⁴Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip and Bartholomew, ¹⁵Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, ¹⁶Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor. ¹⁷He came down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there, along with a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸They that were vexed with unclean spirits — then they were healed. ¹⁹The whole crowd sought to touch him — for there traveled virtue out of him, and healed them all.

²⁰Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be satisfied.
Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²²Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil on account of the Son of Man. ²³Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for your reward is great in heaven. For their ancestors treated the prophets in the same way.

²⁴But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.

²⁵Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.
Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶Woe to you when all people speak well of you,
for their ancestors treated the false prophets in the same way.

²⁷"But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which maliciously use you. ²⁹To the one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from the one who takes your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰Give to everyone who asks you, and from the one who takes what is yours, do not demand it back. ³¹Treat others the way you want them to treat you. ³²If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. ³³And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. ³⁴And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive back, what credit is that

to you? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. ³⁵But love your enemies, do good, and lend expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. ³⁷"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸Give, and it will be given to you — a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap. For the measure you use will be measured back to you." ³⁹He also told them a parable: "Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will they not both fall into a pit? ⁴⁰A disciple is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like the teacher. ⁴¹Why do you see the speck in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? ⁴²How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. ⁴³"No good tree produces bad fruit, nor does a bad tree produce good fruit. ⁴⁴Each tree is known by its own fruit. People do not gather figs from thornbushes, or pick grapes from a bramble bush. ⁴⁵The good person out of the good treasure of the heart produces good, and the evil person out of evil treasure produces evil. For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. ⁴⁶"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? ⁴⁷Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and acts on them — I will show you what that person is like. ⁴⁸That person is like someone building a house who dug deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹But the one who hears and does not act is like someone who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the river burst against it, it collapsed immediately, and the destruction of that house was great."

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The SBLGNT reads simply *en sabbato* ('on a Sabbath') without the textually difficult *deuteroproto* ('second-first') found in some manuscripts and reflected in the KJV. The disciples' actions — picking grain (*etillon*) and rubbing it (*psochontes*) — would have been considered reaping and threshing under strict Pharisaic Sabbath interpretation. Deuteronomy 23:25 permitted eating from a neighbor's field by hand; the issue was not theft but Sabbath work.
1. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Deuteronomy 23:25. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
2. The Greek *exestin* ('it is permitted, it is lawful') refers to halakhic legal interpretation — the Pharisees' oral tradition had elaborated thirty-nine categories of forbidden Sabbath work. The accusation is specific: the disciples are violating the Sabbath by performing agricultural labor. The Pharisees address 'you' (plural), including Jesus as responsible for his disciples' behavior.
3. Jesus's opening 'Have you not even read?' (*oude touto anegnote*) is a pointed challenge to the Pharisees' biblical expertise. The appeal to David's precedent (1 Samuel 21:1-6) is a brilliant rhetorical move: if David, the greatest king, could supersede the letter of the law when necessity demanded, how much more can the Son of David? The parallel is: David was hungry and broke the bread law; the disciples are hungry and break the Sabbath law.
3. [TCR Cross-Reference] References 1 Samuel 21:1-6 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
4. The 'bread of the Presence' (*artous tes protheseos*, literally 'bread of the setting-forth') refers to the twelve loaves placed before God in the tabernacle and renewed weekly (Leviticus 24:5-9, Exodus 25:30). Only priests could eat the old loaves. David's action in 1 Samuel 21:1-6 established a principle: human need can take precedence over ritual restriction. Jesus does not argue that the Sabbath law is wrong but that its application must serve human well-being.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Leviticus 24:5-9. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 25:30. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 1 Samuel 21:1-6. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
5. The claim is extraordinary: the Son of Man is *kyrios* ('lord, master, sovereign') of the Sabbath — the day God himself instituted (Genesis 2:2-3, Exodus 20:8-11). If Jesus is lord of the Sabbath, he has authority to determine its proper observance. Luke does not include Mark's statement 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath' (Mark 2:27), going directly to the christological claim.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Genesis 2:2-3 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 20:8-11 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.

6. Luke specifies 'the right hand' (he dexia) — a detail absent from Mark and Matthew. The right hand was considered the hand of power, skill, and blessing; its loss was particularly disabling. The Greek xera ('dry, withered, atrophied') indicates a chronic condition, not an acute injury. The scene is set for another Sabbath confrontation.
7. The verb pareterounto ('were watching closely, were observing carefully') suggests hostile surveillance. Luke reveals their intent: not to learn or to wonder but to 'find a charge' (heurōsin kategorein) — legal language for building a case. The healing has not yet occurred, but the opposition has already decided on their conclusion.
8. Again Jesus demonstrates knowledge of internal thoughts (edei tous dialogismous auton, cf. 5:22). Rather than avoiding the confrontation, Jesus makes it public — placing the man 'in the middle' (eis to meson) forces everyone to see the human need that stands at the center of the Sabbath debate. The man's obedient response sets the stage for the healing.
9. Jesus reframes the question entirely. The Pharisees asked whether healing was permitted; Jesus asks whether doing good or doing harm is permitted. The verbs agathopoiesai ('to do good') and kakopoiesai ('to do harm') create a stark binary — if healing is forbidden, then refusing to heal when one can is doing harm. The Sabbath, meant for human flourishing, becomes an instrument of suffering when its observance prevents mercy. Jesus forces the opposition to choose between their interpretation and basic human compassion.
10. The verb periblepsamenos ('having looked around at') describes a deliberate, sweeping gaze — Jesus looks each opponent in the eye before acting. The command 'stretch out your hand' (ekteinon ten cheira sou) requires the man to do what he cannot do — and in the act of obedience, ability is given. The passive apekatestathē ('was restored') is a divine passive — God restores through Jesus's command.
11. The Greek anoias ('madness, fury, senselessness') indicates an irrational rage — literally 'without mind.' They are 'filled' (eplesthesan) with it, as others have been 'filled' with the Holy Spirit. Luke presents two types of fullness: Spirit-filled praise and fury-filled plotting. Their discussion about 'what they might do to Jesus' (ti an poiesian to Iesou) is the beginning of the conspiracy that will lead to the cross.
12. The verb dianyktereoun ('spending the whole night') appears only here in the New Testament. Jesus's all-night prayer precedes the appointment of the Twelve — the most consequential leadership decision of his ministry is preceded by the most extended prayer Luke records. The phrase en te proseuche tou theou ('in the prayer of God') could mean 'in prayer to God' or possibly 'in a house of prayer dedicated to God.' The former is more likely.
13. The verb exelexamenos ('having chosen, having selected') indicates deliberate, Spirit-informed selection from a larger group of disciples. The title apostolous ('apostles, sent ones') from the verb apostello ('to send') defines their role: they are commissioned representatives, sent with the authority of the one who sends them. The number twelve corresponds to the twelve tribes of Israel — the apostles represent the reconstituted people of God.
14. Simon receives the name Petros ('Peter,' from petra, 'rock'). This renaming echoes the Old Testament pattern of God renaming those he commissions for special roles (Abram to Abraham, Jacob to Israel). Andrew and Simon are brothers; James and John are brothers (sons of Zebedee, 5:10). The list is arranged in pairs, a pattern that may reflect mission practice (cf. 10:1, sent 'two by two').
15. Matthew is identified with Levi the tax collector (5:27-28) by tradition. Thomas (from Aramaic te'oma, 'twin') will later be known for his doubt and his confession (John 20:24-28). James son of Alphaeus is distinguished from James son of Zebedee. Simon 'the Zealot' (zeoloten) indicates either membership in the Zealot political movement opposing Rome or simply religious zeal. The group includes a former tax collector (Roman collaborator) and a zealot (anti-Roman nationalist) — an extraordinary combination.
16. Two men named Judas (Ioudas) are listed. 'Judas of James' (Ioudan Iakobou) is called 'son of James' by most interpreters (though 'brother of James' is possible; the KJV chooses 'brother'). Judas Iscariot — whose surname may mean 'man of Keriath' (a Judean town) or may derive from the Latin sicarius ('dagger-man') — is identified proleptically as prodotes ('traitor, betrayer'). Luke names the end from the beginning.
17. The Greek topou pedinou ('a level/flat place') gives this sermon its traditional name, 'Sermon on the Plain,' distinguishing it from Matthew's 'Sermon on the Mount.' Jesus has come down from the mountain (v. 12) to level ground. The audience includes people from Tyre and Sidon — Gentile territory — consistent with Luke's universal scope. The crowd includes 'disciples' (mathetōn, a larger group than the Twelve) and 'the people' (laou, the general population).
18. Luke distinguishes between those with diseases (nosōn, physical illness) and those troubled by unclean spirits (pneumatōn akathartōn) — different conditions requiring different interventions, though both are resolved by Jesus's power. The verb etherapeuonto ('were being healed, were cured') is in the imperfect, suggesting ongoing healing activity.
19. The verb ezetoun ('were seeking, were trying') shows the crowd's desperate urgency. The Greek dynamis ('power') literally 'was going out from him' (par autou exercheto) — Luke depicts healing power as a tangible force that radiates from Jesus's person. This same concept appears in the story of the woman who touched his garment (8:46). The universal scope — 'healing everyone' (iato pantas) — demonstrates the comprehensive nature of Jesus's restorative power.
20. Luke's Beatitudes are addressed directly to the disciples in the second person ('you who are poor') rather than Matthew's third person ('the poor in spirit'). The Greek ptochoi ('poor, destitute, beggars') without Matthew's qualifying 'in spirit' (to pneumatō) refers primarily to material poverty, though spiritual poverty is not excluded. Luke's Jesus consistently champions the economically poor (1:52-53, 4:18, 7:22, 14:13, 16:19-31). The kingdom of God belongs to the poor — not as a future reward for suffering but as a present reality of divine reversal.

- 21.** Luke adds *nyn* ('now') twice, creating a temporal contrast between present suffering and future reversal. The Greek *chortasthesesthe* ('you will be satisfied, you will be filled') was originally used for feeding animals to satisfaction — it implies complete, even excessive fullness. The verb *gelasete* ('you will laugh') is unique to Luke's Beatitudes — laughter as the reversal of weeping. The structure mirrors the Magnificat: God fills the hungry and satisfies those who mourn.
- 22.** Four verbs describe escalating persecution: hate (*misesōsin*), exclude/separate (*aphorisosin* — possibly excommunication from the synagogue), insult/reproach (*oneidisōsin*), and reject/cast out your name (*ekbalosin* to *onoma*). The phrase 'on account of the Son of Man' (*heneka tou huiou tou anthrōpou*) specifies that the blessing applies specifically to persecution for loyalty to Jesus, not suffering in general.
- 23.** The verb *skirtesate* ('leap for joy') is the same word used for the unborn John leaping in Elizabeth's womb (1:41, 44) — physical, exuberant joy. The persecuted are placed in the lineage of the prophets — to be rejected for God's sake is to share the fate of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Elijah. The 'great reward in heaven' (*misthos polys en to ourano*) does not mean a distant, immaterial compensation but the heavenly reality that already exists and will be fully revealed.
- 24.** The four woes (vv. 24-26) are unique to Luke and mirror the four blessings exactly. The Greek *ouai* ('woe') is not a curse but a prophetic lament — 'how terrible for you.' The verb *apechete* ('you have received in full') is a commercial term used for receipts — the rich have been paid in full; there is no more coming. The Greek *paraklesin* ('comfort, consolation') is the same word used for the 'consolation of Israel' Simeon awaited (2:25). Those who have already found their consolation in wealth will not find it in God.
- 25.** The reversal is exact: full now/hungry later mirrors hungry now/satisfied later (v. 21); laughing now/mourning later mirrors weeping now/laughing later (v. 21). The word *nyn* ('now') again marks the temporal dimension — present condition does not determine ultimate destiny. Luke's Jesus consistently warns that present prosperity can be spiritually dangerous when it becomes self-sufficient and indifferent to the suffering of others.
- 26.** The fourth woe mirrors the fourth blessing. Universal popularity is a danger sign — the false prophets who told people what they wanted to hear were praised (cf. Jeremiah 5:31, Micah 2:11), while the true prophets who spoke God's uncomfortable word were persecuted (v. 23). If everyone speaks well of you, you may be telling people what they want to hear rather than what God says.
- 26.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Jeremiah 5:31. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 26.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Micah 2:11. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 27.** The phrase 'to you who are listening' (*hymn tois akouousin*) narrows the audience to those willing to hear. The command *agapate tous echthrous hymon* ('love your enemies') is the most radical ethical demand in the Gospels. The Greek *agapao* is not an emotion but a deliberate choice to act for another's good — it can be commanded because it is about action, not feeling. 'Do good' (*kalōs poieite*) specifies what love looks like in practice.
- 28.** Four commands form two pairs: love/do good (v. 27) and bless/pray (v. 28). 'Bless' (*eulogeite*) means to speak well of, to invoke God's favor upon — the opposite of their cursing. 'Pray for' (*proseuchesthe peri*) goes beyond words to intercessory action. The verb *epereavonton* ('those who mistreat, those who abuse') describes deliberate hostility. Jesus commands active good toward those who actively harm.
- 29.** The slap on the cheek (*siagona*) was an insult rather than an assault — a backhanded slap was a gesture of contempt. Offering the other cheek is not passive acceptance of abuse but a refusal to retaliate that asserts dignity. Luke reverses the garment order from Matthew (Matthew says tunic then cloak; Luke says cloak then tunic). The *himation* ('outer cloak') was essential for warmth; the *chiton* ('inner tunic') was the basic garment. The teaching demands radical non-retaliation that goes beyond what is taken.
- 30.** The command is sweeping: *panti aitounti* ('to everyone who asks') allows no exceptions. The verb *apaitei* ('demand back') implies legal recourse — do not sue for recovery. These are radical economic principles that prioritize relationship over property. They are not legal codes for civil government but principles for kingdom living that demonstrate trust in God's provision rather than self-protection.
- 31.** The 'Golden Rule' appears in positive form here and in Matthew 7:12. The negative form ('do not do to others what you would not want done to you') was already known in Judaism — attributed to Rabbi Hillel (b. Shabbat 31a). Jesus's positive formulation is more demanding: it requires active initiative, not merely passive restraint. The Greek *kathos thelete* ('as you want') makes the standard one's own desires for good treatment.
- 32.** The Greek *charis* ('credit, grace, thanks') is used here in the sense of 'what is remarkable or praiseworthy about that?' Luke uses 'sinners' (*hamartoloi*) where Matthew uses 'tax collectors' — both make the same point: reciprocal love requires no grace or moral distinction. Even those outside the covenant community practice reciprocal love. Jesus's ethic demands something qualitatively different.
- 33.** The threefold repetition (love, vv. 32; do good, v. 33; lend, v. 34) drives the point home: every form of reciprocal virtue is practiced by people who make no claim to follow God. The standard for disciples must exceed the baseline of ordinary human reciprocity.
- 34.** The Greek *danisete* ('lend') and the expectation of receiving *ta isa* ('equal amount, same amount back') describes ordinary commercial lending. This is not charity but investment. Jesus challenges the economic logic of reciprocity: kingdom economics gives without calculating return.
- 35.** The phrase *meden apelpizontes* ('expecting nothing back, despairing of nothing') captures the radical nature of kingdom generosity. The motivation is not reciprocity but imitation of God — 'you will be children of the Most High' (*esesthe huioi hypsistou*). To be God's children means to act like God. And God's character is defined here as *chrestos* ('kind, good, gracious') toward *tous acharistous kai ponerous* ('the ungrateful and the wicked'). This is Luke's version of Matthew's 'perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.'

36. Where Matthew 5:48 says 'be perfect' (teleioi), Luke says 'be merciful' (oiktirmones). The Greek oiktirmon ('compassionate, merciful') echoes the Hebrew rachum (from rechem, 'womb') — the deep, visceral compassion of a parent for a child. The standard is not abstract moral perfection but God's own compassionate character. This verse encapsulates the entire Sermon on the Plain.
37. Three prohibitions and three corresponding promises form a tight structure. The Greek krinete ('judge') means to pass sentence, to render a verdict — not to exercise discernment (which is required elsewhere). The verb katadikazete ('condemn') is even stronger — to pass a guilty verdict. The verb apolyete ('forgive, release, let go') is the same word used for forgiveness of sins (aphesis). Each human action triggers a divine response: how we treat others determines how God treats us.
38. The imagery is from the grain market: filling a container, pressing the grain down to remove air, shaking it to settle, and piling more until it overflows. God's return is not merely proportional but superabundant. The 'lap' (kolpon, literally 'bosom' or the fold of a garment used as a pocket) was where merchants received their measured goods. The proverb 'the measure you use will be measured back to you' (ho metro metreteite antimetretesetai hymin) applies to generosity, judgment, forgiveness, and all human dealings.
39. The parable is brief and proverbial. In Matthew 15:14, it is directed at the Pharisees; in Luke, the context suggests it applies to the disciples — those who would teach others must first be able to see clearly themselves. The rhetorical questions expect obvious answers: no, a blind guide cannot lead; yes, both will fall.
40. The Greek katertismenos ('fully trained, fully equipped, made complete') does not mean 'perfect' in the moral sense (as the KJV suggests) but 'fully formed' or 'thoroughly prepared.' The principle is that a student's goal is to become like the teacher. If the teacher is blind, the student will also be blind (v. 39). The positive implication: if Jesus is the teacher, the fully trained disciple will be like him.
41. The Greek karpchos ('speck, splinter, small piece of straw') contrasted with dokos ('beam, log, main structural timber') creates deliberate absurdist humor. The contrast is comically exaggerated to make a serious point about self-righteousness. The verb katanoieis ('notice, observe carefully, consider') implies that failure to see one's own faults requires willful inattention.
42. The term hypokrita ('hypocrite') originally meant 'actor' — one who plays a role. Jesus applies it to those who perform the role of moral adviser while ignoring their own greater faults. Note that Jesus does not forbid helping others with their faults — he says 'first' (proton) deal with your own, 'and then' (kai tote) you will see clearly to help. The goal is not indifference to others' faults but honest self-examination as the prerequisite for genuine helpfulness.
43. The Greek sapon ('rotten, worthless, bad') describes fruit that is spoiled and useless. The tree-and-fruit metaphor establishes a direct connection between inner character and outward behavior. The logic is: examine the fruit to know the tree, examine the behavior to know the heart.
44. The examples are common-sense observations from Palestinian agriculture. Figs (syka) come from fig trees, not from thornbushes (akanthōn). Grapes (staphylen) come from grapevines, not from bramble bushes (batou). The principle is self-evident: the nature of the source determines the nature of the product. Applied to human character, one's actions inevitably reveal one's inner condition.
45. The Greek thesauros ('treasure, storehouse') of the heart is the accumulated deposit of character, conviction, and disposition. The verb propherei ('brings forth, produces') indicates that speech and action emerge from this inner storehouse. The concluding proverb — 'out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks' (ek perisseumatōs kardias lalei to stoma) — identifies speech as the most immediate revelation of the heart's condition.
46. The doubled kyrie kyrie ('Lord, Lord') indicates emphatic address — these are not casual followers but people who use the most respectful title. Yet verbal acknowledgment without corresponding obedience is empty. Jesus's challenge is directed at the gap between confession and conduct. The question is unanswerable — there is no good reason for the contradiction.
47. Three actions define the true disciple: coming to Jesus (erchomenos), hearing his words (akouon), and doing them (poion). All three are necessary — hearing without doing is insufficient (v. 49). Luke frames this as a comparison ('I will show you what that person is like'), introducing the parable of the two builders.
48. Luke's version emphasizes the effort of preparation: eskapsev kai ebathynen ('dug and went deep') — the builder deliberately dug down to bedrock rather than building on the surface. The flood (plemmyres, a word unique to this passage in the NT) and the river's violent assault (proserexen, 'burst against, dashed against') represent the trials and crises of life. The house stands not because of the storm's weakness but because of the foundation's strength — dia to kalos oikodomesthai ('because it had been well built').
49. The contrast is not between two different storms but between two different foundations — choris themeliou ('without a foundation'). Both houses face the same crisis; the difference is entirely in the preparation. The collapse is immediate (euthys, 'at once') and total — to rhegma ('the destruction, the ruin, the crash') is catastrophic. Luke ends the sermon on this sobering note: hearing Jesus's words without obeying them leads not to a minor setback but to complete ruin.

7

Summary: *Luke 7 presents three major episodes that reveal Jesus's authority and compassion across social boundaries. A Roman centurion in Capernaum displays extraordinary faith by asking Jesus to heal his servant with a word alone — faith Jesus declares unmatched in Israel. At Nain, Jesus raises a widow's only son from the dead, evoking the Elijah-Elisha prophetic tradition. When John the Baptist sends disciples to ask if Jesus is 'the one who is to come,' Jesus responds by pointing to the evidence of his ministry. The chapter concludes with a sinful woman anointing Jesus's feet at a Pharisee's dinner, provoking a parable about forgiveness and love.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The centurion's faith is remarkable precisely because he is a Gentile who understands authority structures — he recognizes that Jesus commands illness the way a military officer commands soldiers. The raising at Nain has no parallel in Matthew or Mark and closely mirrors Elijah's raising of the widow's son at Zarephath (1 Kings 17:17-24). Jesus's reply to John's disciples (vv. 22-23) is a mosaic of Isaiah quotations (29:18-19, 35:5-6, 61:1) that implicitly identifies Jesus as the fulfillment of prophetic hope. The anointing scene demonstrates Luke's distinctive theology of forgiveness: the woman's great love is the evidence of great forgiveness already received, not its cause.*

Translation Friction: *The centurion story differs in detail from Matthew 8:5-13, where the centurion comes in person. Luke has him send intermediaries (Jewish elders, then friends), which many scholars consider the more historically precise account. We render Luke's text as it stands. The identity of the anointing woman is not specified — she is not Mary Magdalene (a later tradition) or Mary of Bethany (John 12). Luke calls her simply 'a woman in the city who was a sinner.'*

Connections: *The widow of Nain episode echoes 1 Kings 17:17-24 (Elijah) and 2 Kings 4:18-37 (Elisha). Jesus's words to John's disciples draw from Isaiah 29:18-19, 35:5-6, and 61:1-2. The parable of the two debtors (vv. 41-43) anticipates the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:23-35. John the Baptist's question connects to his earlier testimony in Luke 3:15-17.*

¹After he had finished all his words in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ²Now a centurion's servant, who was highly valued by him, was sick and about to die. ³When he heard about Jesus, he sent Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and save the life of his servant. ⁴When they came to Jesus, they urged him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy for you to do this for him, ⁵Since he loveth our nation, then he has built us a synagogue. ⁶Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. ⁷Therefore I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. ⁸For I too am a man placed under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." ⁹When Jesus heard this, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd following him, said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." ¹⁰And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant in good health. ¹¹Soon afterward, he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. ¹²As he drew near to the gate of the town, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the town was with her. ¹³When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." ¹⁴Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" ¹⁷And this report about him spread through all Judea and all the surrounding region. ¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. ¹⁹And John, summoning two of his disciples, sent them to the Lord, asking, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?" ²⁰When the men came to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, asking, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'" ²¹In that very hour he healed many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits, and to many who were blind he gave sight. ²²And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the

dead are raised, and the poor have good news proclaimed to them. ²³And blessed is the one who is not offended by me." ²⁴When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who wear splendid clothing and live in luxury are in royal palaces. ²⁶What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is the one about whom it is written, 'Look, I send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' ²⁸I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." ²⁹When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God righteous, having been baptized with John's baptism. ³⁰But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. ³¹"To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? ³²They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.' ³³For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' ³⁴The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵Yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children." ³⁶One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. ³⁷And a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment. ³⁸Stood at his ankles behind him weeping, and started to wash his ankles with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. ³⁹Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him — that she is a sinner." ⁴⁰Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he said, "Say it, Teacher." ⁴¹"A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴²When they could not pay, he graciously forgave them both. Now which of them will love him more?" ⁴³Simon answered, "I suppose the one to whom he forgave more." He said to him, "You have judged correctly." ⁴⁴Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased kissing my feet. ⁴⁶You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. ⁴⁷Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven — for she loved much. But the one who is forgiven little, loves little." ⁴⁸Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." ⁴⁹Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" ⁵⁰And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. This verse connects the Sermon on the Plain (chapter 6) to the narratives that follow. The phrase *eis tas akoas tou laou* ('in the hearing of the people') emphasizes the public nature of the teaching.
2. The word *entimos* ('valued, precious, honored') indicates this was no ordinary slave — the centurion had genuine affection for this servant. Luke uses *doulos* ('slave, servant') rather than Matthew's *pais* ('boy, servant, child').
3. Unlike Matthew's account where the centurion approaches directly, Luke has him send intermediaries — Jewish elders (*presbyterous tōn Ioudaiōn*). This may reflect the centurion's cultural sensitivity about a Gentile approaching a Jewish teacher, or Luke's interest in the relationship between this Roman and the Jewish community.
4. The Jewish elders vouch for the centurion's worthiness (*axios*) — a judgment that will be ironically reversed by the centurion's own words in verse 6. The elders' advocacy reveals an unusual relationship between this Roman officer and the local Jewish community.
5. A Roman centurion who loves (*agapa*) the Jewish nation and funds synagogue construction is a God-fearer — a Gentile sympathizer with Judaism who has not undergone full conversion. Such figures appear frequently in Luke-Acts (cf. Cornelius in Acts 10).
6. The centurion now sends a second delegation — friends (*philous*) — with a message of self-abasement. Where the elders said 'he is worthy' (*axios*, v. 4), the centurion says 'I am not worthy' (*ouk hikanos*). The concern about Jesus entering his house may reflect awareness of Jewish purity concerns about Gentile homes.
7. Luke uses *pais* ('servant, child') here rather than *doulos* ('slave') as in verse 2, suggesting the terms may be interchangeable for this relationship. The centurion's faith is in the authority of Jesus's word alone — no touch, no visit, no ritual required.

8. The centurion's reasoning is profound: he understands authority from the inside. Because he operates under the authority of Rome and exercises delegated authority over soldiers, he recognizes that Jesus operates under the authority of God and exercises delegated authority over illness. The 'how much more' logic is implicit — if a Roman officer's word commands obedience, how much more the word of one who commands on behalf of God.
9. The verb *ethaumasen* ('marveled, was amazed') is striking — Jesus is rarely said to be amazed. That a Gentile soldier displays greater faith than anyone in Israel is a provocative declaration, anticipating Luke's consistent theme that outsiders often respond more readily than insiders (cf. the Samaritans, the prodigal's return).
10. Luke records the healing without narrating the moment — the messengers simply find the servant well (*hygiainonta*, 'in good health'). The healing has occurred at a distance, confirming the centurion's faith that Jesus's word alone is sufficient.
11. Nain is a small village about six miles southeast of Nazareth. This episode is unique to Luke. The detail that both disciples and a large crowd accompanied Jesus sets the stage for a public miracle with many witnesses.
12. Every detail heightens the pathos: the son is dead (*tethnēkōs*), he is her only son (*monogenēs*), and she is a widow (*chēra*). Without a son, a widow in the ancient world had no provider, no legal advocate, no social standing. The word *monogenēs* ('only-begotten, one-of-a-kind') is the same word John uses for Jesus (John 3:16). Two crowds converge at the town gate — one following Jesus, one following death.
13. Luke calls Jesus 'the Lord' (*ho kyrios*) — a title Luke uses in narrative more freely than the other Gospels. The verb *esplanchnisthē* ('had compassion') derives from *splanchna* ('intestines, bowels'), reflecting the ancient understanding that deep emotion was felt in the gut. Jesus initiates this miracle unprompted — no one asks him to intervene.
14. Touching a bier (*soros*, the open coffin or funeral stretcher) rendered a person ceremonially unclean (Numbers 19:11-16). Jesus's touch stops the procession. The command *egerthēti* ('arise, be raised') is the same verb used for resurrection throughout the New Testament. Jesus addresses the dead man directly — his word has authority even over death.
14. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Numbers 19:11-16. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
15. The phrase 'gave him to his mother' (*edōken auton tē mētri autou*) directly echoes 1 Kings 17:23, where Elijah 'gave him to his mother' after raising the widow of Zarephath's son. Luke's readers would recognize the prophetic parallel. The detail that the young man began to speak confirms the reality of the restoration — he is not merely resuscitated but fully alive.
15. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 1 Kings 17:23 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
16. The crowd's response identifies Jesus as a prophet — specifically a great prophet, evoking Elijah or the prophet like Moses promised in Deuteronomy 18:15. The verb *epeskepsato* ('has visited') is a key Lukan term (cf. 1:68, 78) meaning God has come to intervene on behalf of his people, echoing the Hebrew *paqad*.
16. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Deuteronomy 18:15. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
17. The word *logos* ('word, report, account') indicates that the story of the Nain miracle becomes widely known. 'Judea' here may refer broadly to the land of the Jews rather than strictly to the southern province.
18. John the Baptist is in prison (Luke 3:19-20). His disciples serve as intermediaries, bringing news of Jesus's ministry. The phrase *peri pantōn toutōn* ('about all these things') refers to the centurion's healing and the raising at Nain.
19. John's question is startling from the one who identified Jesus at the Jordan (Luke 3:16). Whether it reflects genuine doubt in prison, a desire for his disciples' benefit, or a prophetic impatience that the kingdom has not yet arrived in the way he expected (cf. Luke 3:17, the 'winnowing fork'), is debated. The phrase 'the one who is to come' (*ho erchomenos*) was a recognized messianic title.
20. The repetition of the question emphasizes its weight. Luke records the full exchange, showing the messengers faithfully relaying John's exact words.
21. Luke inserts this summary of healing activity so that Jesus's response to John in the next verse is grounded in observable evidence. The verb *echarisato* ('gave as a gift, granted graciously') shares the root of *charis* ('grace') — sight is a gift of grace.
22. Jesus does not answer John's question directly but points to evidence drawn from Isaiah's prophecies: Isaiah 29:18-19 (deaf hear, blind see), Isaiah 35:5-6 (blind, deaf, lame), and Isaiah 61:1 (good news to the poor). The list forms a composite fulfillment citation. The final item — the poor receiving good news — is climactic, echoing Jesus's own programmatic statement in Luke 4:18.
22. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 29:18-19. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
22. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 35:5-6. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
22. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 61:1. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.

- 23.** The verb *skandalisthē* ('caused to stumble, take offense') is a warning: Jesus's ministry does not match the expected pattern of a conquering Messiah. The beatitude is gentle but pointed — even John may need to recalibrate his expectations. Jesus is the stumbling stone (*skandalon*) for those whose messianic hopes don't match his methods.
- 24.** Jesus waits until John's messengers leave before publicly praising John — perhaps to spare John's dignity. The image of a reed shaken by the wind suggests weakness and vacillation. The answer is obviously 'No' — John is anything but weak-willed.
- 25.** The contrast is between the desert prophet in rough garments and the courtier in fine robes. John is in Herod's prison, but he does not belong to Herod's world. Luke adds 'luxury' (*tryphē*) to Matthew's version, sharpening the contrast.
- 26.** Jesus affirms John's prophetic identity but elevates him beyond it — John is 'more than a prophet' (*perissoteron prophētou*) because he is the forerunner who directly precedes the Messiah.
- 27.** The quotation combines Exodus 23:20 and Malachi 3:1. In the original Malachi context, God sends his messenger before his own coming to the temple. By applying this to John as the forerunner of Jesus, the text implicitly identifies Jesus with the LORD whose coming Malachi announces.
- 27.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Malachi 3:1. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 27.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 23:20. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 28.** The SBLGNT omits 'prophet' (*prophētēs*) after 'John' — making the statement even more sweeping: no human born has been greater than John. Yet the kingdom of God introduces a new order in which even the least participant surpasses the greatest figure of the old order. This is not a diminishment of John but an exaltation of the kingdom.
- 29.** The phrase *edikaiōsan ton theon* ('justified God, declared God righteous') is a remarkable expression — the people acknowledged that God's plan through John was right. Tax collectors (*telōnai*), despised as collaborators with Rome, are singled out as responsive to God's purposes.
- 30.** The contrast is stark: sinners accepted God's plan; the religious experts rejected (*ēthetēsan*) it. The phrase *boulēn tou theou* ('the purpose/counsel of God') is a weighty theological term — the Pharisees are not merely declining a ritual but rejecting God's redemptive plan.
- 31.** Jesus introduces a parable with a double rhetorical question — a common rabbinic teaching format. The phrase 'this generation' (*tēs geneas tautēs*) carries a negative connotation throughout the Gospels, suggesting stubbornness and spiritual obtuseness.
- 32.** The image is of petulant children who refuse to play along regardless of the game proposed. Whether the game is a wedding (flute, dancing) or a funeral (dirge, weeping), they refuse to participate. This generation rejected both John's austerity and Jesus's celebration.
- 33.** John's ascetic lifestyle — no bread, no wine — was consistent with prophetic and Nazirite traditions, but his critics dismissed it as demonic. The accusation 'He has a demon' is the most extreme form of rejection.
- 34.** The accusation *phagos kai oinopotēs* ('glutton and drunkard') echoes the charge against a 'rebellious son' in Deuteronomy 21:20, which carried the death penalty. Jesus's critics may be implicitly making a capital accusation. The phrase 'friend of tax collectors and sinners' (*philos telōnōn kai hamartōlōn*) was intended as an insult but has become one of the most beloved descriptions of Jesus.
- 34.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 21:20. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 35.** The personification of Wisdom (*sophia*) echoes Proverbs 8-9. The meaning is that God's wisdom — expressed through both John's austerity and Jesus's celebratory presence — is proven right by its results ('children,' *teknōn*). Luke has 'all her children' where Matthew has 'her deeds' (Matthew 11:19).
- 35.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Proverbs 8-9 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 36.** Jesus accepts dinner invitations from Pharisees as well as sinners — he is not partisan in his associations. The verb *kateklithē* ('reclined') indicates a formal meal; diners reclined on couches, leaning on the left elbow with feet extending behind them — a detail essential for understanding the woman's approach in verse 38.
- 37.** The woman is identified only as 'a sinner' (*hamartōlos*) — likely a euphemism for a prostitute, though Luke does not specify. She is not named, and there is no basis for identifying her with Mary Magdalene (a conflation dating to Pope Gregory I in 591 AD). The alabaster flask (*alabastron*) of *myron* ('perfumed ointment') was an expensive luxury item.
- 38.** Because diners reclined with feet extending away from the table, she could approach his feet from behind without disrupting the meal. Every action is extravagant: tears as washing water, unbound hair as a towel (a Jewish woman letting down her hair in public was scandalous), repeated kissing (*katephilei*, imperfect tense indicating continuous action), and costly ointment on feet rather than head. The scene is an act of lavish, self-abandoning devotion.
- 39.** The Pharisee's reasoning contains a double error: he assumes a prophet would (1) know the woman's character, and (2) refuse her touch. In fact, Jesus does know (as he will demonstrate), and his acceptance of her is precisely the prophetic act. The Pharisee is named Simon in verse 40.

40. Jesus 'answered' (apokritheis) the Pharisee's unspoken thought — demonstrating the very prophetic knowledge Simon doubted. By addressing Simon by name, Jesus personalizes the confrontation. Simon's polite response ('Teacher,' Didaskale) maintains social decorum.
41. A denarius (dēnarion) was approximately one day's wage for a laborer. The debts are therefore roughly 500 days' wages versus 50 — a tenfold difference. The parable is deceptively simple but contains the key to the entire scene.
42. The verb echarisato ('forgave graciously, granted as a favor') shares the root of charis ('grace'). Both debts are cancelled — forgiveness is complete in both cases. The question is about proportional response: who will be more grateful?
43. Simon's cautious 'I suppose' (hypolambanō) suggests he senses a trap. Jesus's confirmation — 'You have judged correctly' (orthōs ekrinas) — is both an affirmation and an ironic reversal: Simon has just pronounced the principle that condemns his own lack of hospitality.
44. Jesus physically turns toward the woman but speaks to Simon — forcing Simon to see her as a person, not a category. The threefold contrast (water/tears, kiss/kissing, oil/ointment) exposes Simon's failure of basic hospitality. Providing water for a guest's feet was a minimal courtesy.
45. A greeting kiss was standard hospitality. Simon neglected even this basic courtesy, while the woman's devotion has been continuous (ou dielipen, 'has not ceased') from the moment Jesus arrived.
46. The final contrast is the sharpest: Simon did not even provide basic olive oil (elaion) for Jesus's head; she provided expensive perfumed ointment (myron) for his feet. Anointing a guest's head was a sign of honor and welcome (cf. Psalm 23:5).
46. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Psalm 23:5. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
47. The logic of the parable makes clear that her love is the result of forgiveness, not its cause. The Greek hou charin ('for which reason') and hoti ('because') indicate evidence, not causation: her great love demonstrates that she has already received great forgiveness. The sentence about 'the one forgiven little' is a subtle rebuke of Simon's self-righteousness.
48. Jesus now addresses the woman directly for the first time. The perfect tense apheōntai ('have been and remain forgiven') confirms a completed action — her forgiveness is not new but is now publicly declared.
49. The other guests raise the question that has been building since Luke 5:21: forgiving sins is a divine prerogative. Their question is left unanswered — Luke lets the implicit Christological claim stand without resolution, forcing the reader to answer for themselves.
50. The verb sesōken ('has saved') is the same word used for physical healing and spiritual salvation. The phrase poreuou eis eirēnēn ('go into peace') translates the Hebrew lekhi leshalom and is a benediction of wholeness — she departs not merely forgiven but restored to shalom.

8

Summary: *Luke 8 opens with a summary of Jesus's itinerant ministry, naming the women who supported it financially. Jesus teaches the Parable of the Sower, explaining how different responses to God's word yield different outcomes. He then redefines family around obedience to God's word. Three dramatic miracles follow in rapid succession: Jesus calms a violent storm on the Sea of Galilee, delivers the Gerasene demoniac from a 'Legion' of unclean spirits, and — in an interwoven double narrative — heals a woman with a twelve-year hemorrhage while raising Jairus's twelve-year-old daughter from death.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The named women in verses 1-3 are extraordinary in ancient literature: Mary Magdalene, Joanna (wife of Herod's steward Chuza), and Susanna are identified as financial patrons of Jesus's mission. Luke alone preserves this detail, showing that the movement was funded by women of means. The Gerasene demoniac episode is the most detailed exorcism in the Gospels, with the demons self-identifying as 'Legion' — a Roman military term carrying political undertones in occupied Palestine. The sandwiched miracle stories of Jairus's daughter and the hemorrhaging woman share the number twelve, linking the girl's age with the woman's years of suffering and creating a literary frame of restoration.*

Translation Friction: *The Gerasene/Gadarene/Gergesene location varies across manuscripts; the SBLGNT reads Gerasenes (Gerasenon). The herd of pigs raises questions about property destruction and Gentile territory. We render the Greek as given without harmonizing with the Markan or Matthean parallels. The phrase 'your faith has saved you' (he pistis sou sesoken se) in verse 48 uses sozo, which means both 'save' and 'heal' — a double meaning impossible to capture in a single English word.*

Connections: The Parable of the Sower parallels Mark 4:1-20 and Matthew 13:1-23. The storm narrative echoes Psalm 107:23-30 and Jonah 1. The demoniac episode parallels Mark 5:1-20. The Jairus/hemorrhage double story parallels Mark 5:21-43. The women patrons anticipate the women at the cross and tomb (Luke 23:49, 55; 24:1-10).

¹Soon afterward, he traveled through every city and village, proclaiming and announcing the good news of the kingdom of God, and the twelve were with him, ²Specific women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom traveled seven devils, ³Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's manager, and Susanna, and numerous others, which served him of their substance. ⁴When a large crowd was gathering and people from every town were coming to him, he spoke by means of a parable: ⁵"A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the sky devoured it. ⁶Other seed fell on rock, and when it grew up, it withered because it had no moisture. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. ⁸And other seed fell into good soil, and when it grew up, it produced fruit a hundredfold." As he said these things, he called out, "The one who has ears to hear, let him hear." ⁹Then his disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest they are given in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. ¹¹Now the parable is this — The seed is the message of God. ¹²The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³The ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a time, and in a season of testing they fall away. ¹⁴As for what fell among the thorns, these are the ones who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the worries and riches and pleasures of life, and they do not bring fruit to maturity. ¹⁵But as for that in the good soil, these are the ones who, having heard the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with endurance. ¹⁶"No one, after lighting a lamp, covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light. ¹⁷For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything concealed that will not be known and come to light. ¹⁸Pay attention, then, to how you hear. For whoever has, more will be given to him; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him." ¹⁹Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. ²⁰He was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you." ²¹But he answered them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it." ²²One day he got into a boat with his disciples and said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." So they set out. ²³As they were sailing, he fell asleep. A violent windstorm came down on the lake, and they were being swamped and were in danger. ²⁴They came and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he got up and rebuked the wind and the surging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid and marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?" ²⁶They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across from Galilee. ²⁷When he stepped out on land, a man from the city met him who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothing and did not live in a house but among the tombs. ²⁸When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, "What do you have to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me!" ²⁹For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For many times it had seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into desolate places. ³⁰Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion" — because many demons had entered him. ³¹And they were begging him not to command them to depart into the abyss. ³²Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter the pigs. And he gave them permission. ³³The demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned. ³⁴When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and reported it in the city and in the countryside. ³⁵Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. ³⁶Those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been saved. ³⁷Then all the people of the surrounding region of the Gerasenes asked him to leave them, because they were gripped with great fear. So he got into the boat and

returned. ³⁸The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹"Return to your home, and declare what God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city what Jesus had done for him. ⁴⁰When Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. ⁴¹And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue. He fell at Jesus's feet and begged him to come to his house, ⁴²Since he had one only daughter, concerning twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he traveled the people thronged him. ⁴³And a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years, who could not be healed by anyone, ⁴⁴Indeed, arrived behind him, and touched the border of his garment — and immediately her issue of blood stanchd. ⁴⁵Jesus said, "Who touched me?" When everyone denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds are surrounding you and pressing against you!" ⁴⁶But Jesus said, "Someone touched me, for I perceived that power had gone out from me." ⁴⁷When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched him and how she was immediately healed. ⁴⁸He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace." ⁴⁹While he was still speaking, someone came from the synagogue ruler's house, saying, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any longer." ⁵⁰But Jesus, hearing this, answered him, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be saved." ⁵¹When he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him except Peter, John, and James, and the father and mother of the child. ⁵²Everyone was weeping and mourning for her, but he said, "Stop weeping, for she has not died but is sleeping." ⁵³And they laughed at him, knowing that she had died. ⁵⁴But taking her by the hand, he called out, saying, "Child, arise." ⁵⁵Her spirit returned, and she got up at once. And he directed that she be given something to eat. ⁵⁶Her parents were amazed, but he ordered them to tell no one what had happened.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The phrase euangelizomenos ten basileian tou theou ('announcing the good news of the kingdom of God') combines two verbs of proclamation — kerusson ('heralding') and euangelizomenos ('bringing good news'). Luke emphasizes the content of Jesus's preaching: the kingdom of God, not merely moral teaching.
2. Mary Magdalene is named first among the women, indicating her prominence. The 'seven demons' (daimonia hepta) denotes the severity of her former affliction, not moral failing — the text says nothing about sexual sin, a later tradition without biblical basis. 'Magdalene' identifies her hometown of Magdala on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee.
3. The verb diekonoun ('were serving, providing for') is the root of 'deacon/ministry.' These women were not passive followers but active financial supporters. Joanna's connection to Herod's court (Chuza was epitropos, a household manager or steward) means Jesus's movement had sympathizers within the ruling elite. Luke alone preserves this remarkable social detail.
4. The phrase dia paraboleas ('by means of a parable') introduces Luke's version of the Sower. Luke compresses the parable material compared to Mark 4, but retains the core teaching about receptivity to God's word.
5. Luke adds the detail that the seed was 'trampled underfoot' (katepatethee), absent from Mark and Matthew. The sower broadcasts seed across all types of ground — ancient Palestinian farming practice involved sowing before plowing, so the different soil types would not yet be visible.
6. Luke uses ikmada ('moisture') where Mark has 'depth of earth' and 'root' — a slight difference in imagery but the same agricultural reality: thin soil over limestone bedrock, common in Palestine, allows quick germination but no sustained growth.
7. The verb apepnixan ('choked, strangled') is vivid — the thorns do not merely crowd the grain but suffocate it. Luke's symphueisai ('growing up together with') emphasizes that the competing growth was simultaneous.
8. Luke simplifies to a single yield — 'a hundredfold' (hekatontaplasiona) — whereas Mark gives thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold. A hundredfold yield was extraordinary in ancient agriculture, where tenfold was typical. The closing formula 'the one who has ears to hear' signals that the parable demands active interpretation.
9. Luke's version is simpler than Mark's, where the disciples ask about parables in general. Here they ask specifically about this parable's meaning.
10. The word mysteria ('mysteries') does not mean puzzles but divine secrets now being revealed to insiders. The Isaiah 6:9-10 allusion ('seeing they may not see') raises the difficult question of whether parables conceal or reveal — Luke softens Mark's harder formulation but retains the tension between revelation and hiddenness.
10. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Isaiah 6:9-10 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
11. Luke identifies the seed as ho logos tou theou ('the word of God'), where Mark has simply 'the word.' Luke's version makes the divine origin of the message explicit.

12. Luke alone adds the purpose clause 'so that they may not believe and be saved' (hina mee pisteusantes sothōsin), making explicit what Mark leaves implicit: the stakes of receptivity to the word are salvation itself. Luke uses 'the devil' (ho diabolos) where Mark has 'Satan.'
13. Luke uses peirasmos ('testing, trial, temptation') where Mark has 'tribulation or persecution' — a broader term that encompasses both external persecution and internal spiritual trial. The verb aphistantai ('they fall away, withdraw') is the root of 'apostasy.'
14. Luke adds hēdonōn ('pleasures') to the thorns' identification — worries, riches, and pleasures form a three-pronged threat. The verb telesophorousin ('bring to maturity, bring to completion') is unique to Luke's version and implies that fruit-bearing requires sustained growth, not merely initial response.
15. The phrase kardia kalē kai agathē ('an honest and good heart') echoes Greek moral vocabulary — kalos kai agathos was the classical Greek ideal of nobility. Luke may be adapting the parable for a Hellenistic audience. The word hypomonē ('endurance, patient steadfastness') is a key virtue in Luke-Acts, emphasizing that fruitfulness requires perseverance.
16. The lamp saying follows naturally from the parable's theme of revelation. What is taught in parables is not meant to remain hidden permanently. Luke's version specifies 'those who enter' (hoi eisporouomenoi), possibly reflecting the setting of a house church where the lamp illuminates a room for newcomers.
17. The double negative ou mē ('certainly not') with the subjunctive gnōsthē ('be known') creates the strongest possible assurance: what is now hidden will without exception be revealed. This applies both to the mysteries of the kingdom and to human secrets.
18. Luke writes 'how you hear' (pōs akouete) where Mark has 'what you hear' — Luke stresses the manner of reception, not merely the content. The paradox of having and losing echoes the parable's logic: those who receive the word rightly gain more understanding, while those who receive it poorly lose even their initial grasp.
19. Luke softens Mark's account where Jesus's family comes to seize him thinking he is out of his mind (Mark 3:21). Luke omits the negative motivation entirely, presenting the family's arrival neutrally.
20. The notification sets up Jesus's redefinition of family in the next verse. The physical separation — they are 'outside' (exō) — becomes symbolic of the distinction between biological and spiritual kinship.
21. This saying redefines kinship around obedience to God's word — the same theme as the Sower parable. Luke connects hearing and doing (akouontes kai poiountes), a pair that will recur in 6:47-49 (the house on the rock) and 11:28. The saying does not reject biological family but subordinates it to the family formed by response to God's word.
22. Luke uses limnēs ('lake') rather than Mark's thalassēs ('sea') — geographically more accurate for the Sea of Galilee, which is a freshwater lake. The command to cross to 'the other side' moves them toward Gentile territory, where the Gerasene episode will take place.
23. The verb aphypnōsen ('he fell asleep') emphasizes Jesus's full humanity. The geography matters: the Sea of Galilee sits 700 feet below sea level, surrounded by hills through which winds funnel suddenly. The verb ekindyneuon ('they were in danger') is unique to Luke's account and underscores the life-threatening nature of the storm.
24. Luke uses epistatēs ('Master, overseer') — a title unique to Luke's Gospel — rather than Mark's 'Teacher.' The doubled address 'Master, Master' conveys urgency. Jesus 'rebuked' (epetimēsen) the storm with the same verb used for rebuking demons, suggesting the storm is treated as a hostile force. The sudden calm (galēnē) echoes Psalm 107:29.
24. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Psalm 107:29. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
25. The question 'Where is your faith?' implies the disciples should have trusted Jesus even during the storm. Their response combines fear (phobēthentes) and wonder (ethaumasas) — the typical human reaction to a theophany. The Old Testament reserves power over sea and storm for God alone (Job 38:8-11; Psalm 89:9; Psalm 107:29), so the question 'Who is this?' carries an implicit christological answer.
25. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Job 38:8-11 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
25. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Psalm 89:9 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
25. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Psalm 107:29 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
26. The SBLGNT reads Gerasēnōn ('Gerasenes'). Gerasa was a city of the Decapolis, predominantly Gentile territory. Luke clarifies the geography for his readers: it is 'across from Galilee' (antipera tēs Galilaias), on the eastern shore of the lake.
27. Luke describes three marks of the man's dehumanization: demon possession, nakedness, and habitation among the dead. Living in tombs would make him perpetually unclean under Jewish purity law. The detail 'from the city' (ek tēs poleōs) suggests he had once been part of normal society before his affliction drove him out.
28. The formula ti emoi kai soi ('what to me and to you?') is a Semitic idiom expressing incompatibility or protest. The demon recognizes Jesus as 'Son of the Most High God' (huie tou theou tou hypsistou) — 'Most High' (hypsistos) is the same title used of God in Genesis 14:18-22 and in Gabriel's announcement to Mary (Luke 1:32). The irony is that the demon correctly identifies Jesus while the disciples have just asked 'Who is this?'

28. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Genesis 14:18-22 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
29. This parenthetical explains why the demon cried out — Jesus had already issued a command. The description of the man's superhuman strength in breaking chains and his being 'driven' (elauneto) into wilderness areas portrays total domination by the demonic power. The passive voice emphasizes the man's lack of agency.
30. A Roman legion comprised approximately five to six thousand soldiers. The name 'Legion' (Legiōn) is a Latin loanword in Greek, carrying military overtones that would resonate in Roman-occupied territory. The name also reveals how thoroughly the man's identity has been consumed — he no longer has a personal name, only the collective designation of his oppressors.
31. The abyssos ('abyss') is the place of confinement for evil spirits (cf. Revelation 9:1-2, 11; 20:1-3). Luke uses this term where Mark does not, reflecting Jewish apocalyptic belief that demons feared premature imprisonment. The demons recognize Jesus's authority to sentence them.
32. The presence of pigs confirms this is Gentile territory — pigs were unclean animals forbidden to Jews (Leviticus 11:7). The demons must ask Jesus's permission, demonstrating his absolute authority even over a legion of evil spirits. The verb *epetrepsen* ('he permitted') shows that Jesus controls the terms.
33. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Leviticus 11:7. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
33. The verb *hōrmēsen* ('rushed, charged') is violent and sudden. The verb *apepnigē* ('drowned, were choked') is the same root used for the thorns 'choking' the seed in verse 7 — an ironic verbal connection. The destruction of the herd serves as visible proof that the demons have genuinely departed from the man.
34. The herdsmen's flight and report set up the confrontation between Jesus and the townspeople. They function as witnesses to both the loss of the pigs and the implied power of the exorcism.
35. The contrast is stunning: the man who was naked, chained, and living among the dead is now clothed (*himatismenon*), in his right mind (*sōphronounta*), and seated at Jesus's feet — the posture of a disciple. Each detail reverses his former condition. The townspeople's fear (*ephobēthēsan*) mirrors the disciples' fear after the storm, but leads to a different response.
36. Luke uses *esōthē* ('was saved') rather than merely 'was healed' — the verb *sōzō* carries both physical and spiritual dimensions. The man's deliverance is described as salvation, not simply a medical cure.
37. The entire population asks Jesus to leave — the only place in the Gospels where a community rejects Jesus's presence after witnessing a miracle. Their great fear (*phobō megalō*) is not reverence but terror, possibly compounded by the economic loss of the pigs. Jesus complies without protest, respecting their choice.
38. The man's desire to follow Jesus contrasts sharply with the townspeople's desire for Jesus to leave. 'To be with him' (*einai syn autō*) uses the language of discipleship. Unusually, Jesus refuses — in Gentile territory, the healed man himself will be the witness.
39. Jesus says 'what God has done for you'; the man proclaims 'what Jesus has done for him.' Luke lets the substitution stand without comment — the reader is left to draw the christological conclusion. The man becomes the first Gentile evangelist in Luke's narrative.
40. The contrast between the Gerasenes' rejection and the Galilean crowd's welcome is deliberate. The verb *apedexato* ('welcomed, received gladly') sets up the warm reception that frames the two miracle stories to follow.
41. Jairus (*Iairos*, from Hebrew *Ya'ir*, 'he enlightens') is named only in Luke and Mark. As *archōn tēs synagōgēs* ('ruler of the synagogue'), he was responsible for organizing worship services — a prominent community figure. His prostration before Jesus shows the desperation that overrides social status.
42. Luke emphasizes she is *monogenēs* ('only-begotten, one and only') — the same word used of Jesus in John's Gospel. She is about twelve years old — the same number of years the hemorrhaging woman has suffered (v. 43), creating a deliberate literary connection. The crowd 'pressing in' (*synepnigon*) sets up the interruption by the hemorrhaging woman.
43. The 'discharge of blood' (*rhysei haimatos*) made her perpetually unclean under Levitical law (Leviticus 15:25-27), excluding her from worship and social contact. For twelve years she has lived in isolation. Some manuscripts add 'who had spent all her livelihood on physicians' (paralleling Mark 5:26), but the SBLGNT omits this clause.
43. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Leviticus 15:25-27 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
44. The *kraspedon* ('fringe, tassel, border') refers to the tassels (Hebrew *tzitzit*) on the corners of a Jewish garment as commanded in Numbers 15:38-39. Her approach from behind reflects her awareness of her unclean status — touching someone would transmit impurity. Instead, Jesus's holiness flows outward and cleanses her. The adverb *parachrēma* ('immediately') is characteristic of Luke.
44. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Numbers 15:38-39. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.

45. Jesus's question is not about information — he distinguishes between the crowd's jostling and one person's deliberate touch of faith. Peter's response, using *epistatēs* ('Master') again, expresses bewilderment: in such a crush, how could one touch be singled out?
46. The word *dynamis* ('power') is not 'virtue' in the modern English sense (as the KJV might suggest) but active healing energy. Jesus experiences the outflow of power — a remarkable detail suggesting that the healing was not merely willed but cost something.
47. Her trembling (*tremousa*) reflects fear — she had taken a social risk by touching someone while unclean. But Jesus forces a public declaration for her benefit: her healing must be witnessed by the community so that her social restoration is public, not merely private. She is healed in body but needs public vindication to be restored to community life.
48. The address 'Daughter' (*Thygatēr*) is extraordinary — it is both tender and restorative, publicly declaring her a member of the family of God. The phrase *hē pistis sou sesōken se* ('your faith has saved you') uses *sōzō*, which means both 'save' and 'heal.' The double meaning is intentional: physical healing and spiritual salvation converge. 'Go in peace' (*poreuou eis eirēnēn*) echoes the Hebrew *shalom* — complete well-being, not merely absence of conflict.
49. The timing is devastating — the interruption caused by the hemorrhaging woman's healing has cost Jairus precious minutes. The messenger's words 'do not trouble the Teacher' (*mēketi skylle ton didaskalon*) assume that death is beyond Jesus's power. The verb *skyllō* ('to trouble, bother, harass') suggests the messenger views further appeal as pointless.
50. Jesus responds to the death announcement with the same *sōzō* ('will be saved/made whole') used for the hemorrhaging woman. The command structure — 'Do not fear... only believe' — strips away every response except faith. Jairus has just witnessed the hemorrhaging woman's faith rewarded; now he must exercise the same trust in a more extreme situation.
51. The inner circle of Peter, John, and James witnesses the most significant miracles (also the Transfiguration, Luke 9:28). Luke reverses Mark's order, placing John before James — possibly reflecting John's greater prominence in the early church as known to Luke's audience.
52. The verb *ekoptonto* ('were mourning, beating their breasts') describes the loud, demonstrative mourning customary in ancient Jewish funerals. Jesus's statement that the girl is 'sleeping' (*katheudei*) is either a metaphor for death (as Paul uses in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14) or a literal claim that she is not yet dead. Luke leaves the ambiguity intact.
53. The verb *katagelōn* ('were laughing scornfully') indicates mocking derision, not amusement. The mourners' certainty that she is dead sets up the miracle — there is no ambiguity about her condition in the minds of witnesses.
54. Jesus takes her hand — touching a corpse would normally render one unclean (Numbers 19:11), but as with the hemorrhaging woman, Jesus's power flows outward to restore rather than receiving contamination inward. Luke simplifies Mark's Aramaic *talitha koum* to the Greek *hē pais egeire* ('Child, arise'). The verb *egeirō* is the same word used for resurrection throughout the New Testament.
54. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Numbers 19:11. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
55. The phrase 'her spirit returned' (*epestrepson to pneuma autēs*) is unique to Luke and confirms that she had genuinely died — her spirit had departed and now comes back. The command to give her food serves two purposes: it proves the resurrection is physical (a spirit does not eat) and it shows Jesus's practical compassion even in a moment of cosmic power.
56. The command to silence (the 'messianic secret') contrasts with the Gerasene demoniac, who was told to proclaim. In Jewish territory, public reports of raising the dead would provoke dangerous political attention. The parents' amazement (*exestēsan*, literally 'were beside themselves') is the appropriate response to witnessing death reversed.

9

Summary: Luke 9 is a pivotal chapter that marks the transition from Jesus's Galilean ministry to the journey toward Jerusalem. Jesus sends the Twelve on their first independent mission, feeds five thousand with five loaves and two fish, and elicits Peter's confession that he is the Christ. The chapter then introduces the cost of discipleship, reveals Jesus's glory at the Transfiguration, heals a demon-possessed boy, and repeatedly warns the disciples about his coming suffering. The chapter closes with three would-be followers who each face the radical demands of following Jesus.

*What Makes This Remarkable: Luke compresses an enormous range of material into this chapter, creating a deliberate theological arc: Jesus empowers the Twelve (vv. 1-6), the crowds respond (vv. 7-17), Peter confesses (vv. 18-20), and then Jesus immediately redefines messiahship through suffering (vv. 21-27). The Transfiguration (vv. 28-36) — unique in Luke for noting that Jesus was praying when it happened — confirms divine sonship just after the first passion prediction. Luke alone records that Moses and Elijah spoke with Jesus about his 'exodus' (*exodon*) that he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem, a word loaded with Old Testament resonance. The chapter's final*

section (vv. 51-62) sets Jesus's face toward Jerusalem, a journey that will occupy the next ten chapters of Luke's Gospel.

Translation Friction: The feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels, and Luke's version is the most compressed. Herod's perplexity about Jesus (vv. 7-9) is unique to Luke in its emphasis on Herod's desire to see Jesus — a thread that will not resolve until the passion narrative (23:8). The phrase 'set his face' (to prosōpon estērisen) in v. 51 echoes Isaiah's Servant Songs (Isaiah 50:7) and signals a decisive shift in the narrative structure. The Samaritan village's rejection (vv. 52-56) introduces the Samaritan theme that Luke will develop more fully than any other Gospel.

Connections: The feeding miracle echoes Elisha feeding a hundred men in 2 Kings 4:42-44. The Transfiguration connects to Moses on Sinai (Exodus 34) and Elijah on Horeb (1 Kings 19). Peter's confession parallels the Caesarea Philippi accounts in Matthew 16 and Mark 8, though Luke omits the geographic marker. The 'exodus' language at the Transfiguration ties Jesus's coming death to Israel's foundational deliverance event. The journey to Jerusalem beginning in v. 51 initiates Luke's distinctive 'Travel Narrative' (9:51-19:27).

¹He called the Twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to heal diseases. ²He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ³He told them, "Take nothing for the journey — no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, and do not have two tunics each. ⁴Whatever house you enter, stay there and depart from there. ⁵Wherever people do not welcome you, as you leave that town, shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." ⁶So they set out and traveled through the villages, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere. ⁷Now Herod the tetrarch heard about everything that was happening, and he was perplexed because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, ⁸Of some, that Elias had appeared. And of others, that one of the ancient God's spokespersons was risen again. ⁹Herod said, "I beheaded John. So who is this about whom I hear such things?" And he kept trying to see him. ¹⁰When the apostles returned, they reported to him everything they had done. He took them and withdrew privately to a town called Bethsaida. ¹¹But the crowds found out and followed him. He welcomed them, spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing. ¹²As the day began to decline, the Twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and food, because we are in a desolate place here." ¹³But he told them, "You give them something to eat." They said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish — unless we are to go and buy food for all these people." ¹⁴For there were about five thousand men. He said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty." ¹⁵They did so and had everyone sit down. ¹⁶Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, blessed them, broke them, and kept giving them to the disciples to set before the crowd. ¹⁷They all ate and were satisfied, and twelve baskets of leftover pieces were picked up. ¹⁸Once when Jesus was praying alone, the disciples were with him, and he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" ¹⁹They answered, "John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the ancient prophets has risen." ²⁰He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "The Christ of God." ²¹He strictly warned them and commanded them to tell this to no one, ²²Declaring, the Descendant of Person must suffer numerous matters, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and legal experts, and be slain, and be raised the third day. ²³Then he said to them all, "If anyone wants to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. ²⁴For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. ²⁵For what does it profit a person to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit himself? ²⁶For whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. ²⁷But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God." ²⁸About eight days after these words, he took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothing became dazzling white. ³⁰And suddenly two men were talking with him — Moses and Elijah, ³¹They appeared in radiant glory and spoke about the departure he was about to carry out in Jerusalem. ³²Now Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. ³³As they were departing from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three shelters — one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" — not knowing what he was saying. ³⁴While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵A voice came from the

cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One — listen to him!" ³⁶When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen. ³⁷The next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a large crowd met him. ³⁸Suddenly a man from the crowd cried out, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. ³⁹A spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams. It convulses him until he foams at the mouth, and it scarcely leaves him, battering him as it goes. ⁴⁰I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not." ⁴¹Jesus answered, "O faithless and twisted generation, how long must I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here." ⁴²While the boy was still approaching, the demon threw him down and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. ⁴³Everyone was astonished at the majesty of God. But while they were all marveling at everything he was doing, he said to his disciples, ⁴⁴"Let these words sink into your ears: the Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men." ⁴⁵But they did not understand this saying. It was concealed from them so that they could not grasp it, and they were afraid to ask him about it. ⁴⁶An argument arose among them about which of them was the greatest. ⁴⁷But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and placed the child beside him. ⁴⁸He told them, "Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For the one who is least among all of you — that person is great." ⁴⁹John responded, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he does not follow with us." ⁵⁰Jesus said to him, "Do not stop him, for whoever is not against you is for you." ⁵¹When the days were approaching for him to be taken up, he resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem. ⁵²He sent messengers ahead of him. They went and entered a Samaritan village to prepare for his arrival, ⁵³Indeed, they did not accept him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When the disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to consume them?" ⁵⁵But he turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶They traveled to another village. ⁵⁷As they were traveling along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." ⁵⁸Jesus said to him, "Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." ⁵⁹He said to another, "Follow me." But the man said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ⁶⁰Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." ⁶¹Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say goodbye to those at my home." ⁶²Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. Luke distinguishes between *dynamis* ('power' — the ability to act) and *exousia* ('authority' — the right to act). This pairing is distinctive to Luke's account of the commissioning and emphasizes that the disciples operate with both divine capability and divine authorization.
2. The verb *apesteilen* ('sent out') is the root of 'apostle' (*apostolos*). Luke uses the formal commissioning verb here, underscoring that this is an authorized mission, not a voluntary outing. The dual mandate — proclamation and healing — mirrors Jesus's own ministry pattern established in Luke 4:18-19.
3. Luke's version prohibits even a staff (*rabdon*), whereas Mark 6:8 allows one — a well-known discrepancy between the Synoptic accounts. The Greek *pēran* ('bag') refers to a traveler's knapsack or beggar's bag. The prohibition of provisions forces total dependence on God's provision through local hospitality, a radical trust that mirrors Israel's wilderness dependence on manna.
4. The instruction to remain in one house prevents the disciples from seeking better accommodations — moving from a poor host to a wealthier one. This preserves the dignity of the first household to offer hospitality and keeps the mission free from the appearance of self-interest.
5. Shaking dust from one's feet was a Jewish practice when leaving Gentile territory, symbolizing the removal of ritual impurity. Applied to Jewish towns, it is a prophetic warning: those who reject the kingdom's messengers place themselves outside the covenant community. The phrase *eis martyrion* ('as a testimony') indicates a visible sign that will serve as evidence at the future judgment.
6. The participle *euangelizomenoi* ('proclaiming good news') is Luke's characteristic vocabulary — he uses this verb more than any other New Testament writer. The word carries the sense of announcing glad tidings, specifically the arrival of God's reign. 'Villages' (*kōmas*) rather than 'towns' or 'cities' suggests a rural, grassroots mission.
7. This is Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, who ruled Galilee and Perea as tetrarch (literally 'ruler of a quarter'). The verb *diēporei* ('was perplexed, was at a loss') is stronger than mere curiosity — it suggests genuine confusion and unease. Luke alone among the Synoptics emphasizes Herod's ongoing perplexity rather than his fear.

8. The three popular theories about Jesus — resurrected John, returned Elijah, or a risen ancient prophet — all frame him within prophetic categories. The expectation of Elijah's return was rooted in Malachi 4:5. Luke's phrase 'ancient prophets' (prophētēs tis tōn archaiōn) is distinctive and may reflect popular beliefs about eschatological prophetic return.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Malachi 4:5 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
9. The emphatic egō ('I myself') in Herod's statement stresses personal responsibility and perhaps defensive anxiety. The imperfect ezētei ('kept trying, was seeking') indicates ongoing, unfulfilled desire — Herod will not actually see Jesus until the passion narrative (Luke 23:8), where this thread finally resolves. Luke plants a narrative seed here that will not bear fruit for fourteen chapters.
10. Luke uses 'apostles' (apostoloi) here rather than 'disciples,' the only time he uses this title in the narrative before Acts. The verb hypechōrēsen ('withdrew') suggests intentional retreat, possibly for rest after the mission or to avoid Herod's attention. Bethsaida was just outside Herod Antipas's jurisdiction, in the tetrarchy of Philip.
11. Despite seeking privacy, Jesus 'welcomed' (apodexamenos) the crowds — a gracious response that contrasts with the disciples' later suggestion to send them away (v. 12). Luke's note that Jesus both taught and healed reinforces the dual nature of his ministry: word and deed together constitute the kingdom's arrival.
12. The phrase hē hēmera ērxato klinein ('the day began to decline') is a literary expression for late afternoon. The word episitimon ('provisions, food') appears only here in the New Testament — it is a supply-chain term suggesting the practical concern behind the disciples' request. Luke's erēmō topō ('desolate place') evokes the wilderness, connecting this feeding to the manna narrative.
13. The emphatic hymeis ('you yourselves') places the responsibility squarely on the disciples, testing their faith and resourcefulness. The disciples' response reveals both their literal-mindedness and the absurdity of the situation from a human perspective. The five loaves would have been flat barley bread, the standard food of the poor.
14. The count of andres ('men') likely excludes women and children, following ancient Near Eastern counting conventions. The organized seating in groups of fifty echoes Moses' organization of Israel in the wilderness (Exodus 18:21, 25), reinforcing the new-exodus typology that runs through the feeding narrative.
14. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 18:21. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
15. The brief obedience statement — they simply did as instructed — mirrors the pattern of faithful response that Luke highlights throughout his Gospel. No objections, no further questions.
16. The sequence — took, blessed, broke, gave — anticipates the Last Supper (Luke 22:19) and the Emmaus meal (Luke 24:30). Luke's readers would recognize eucharistic echoes. The imperfect edidou ('kept giving') suggests a continuous action: the bread did not run out as he distributed it. The act of looking up to heaven before blessing follows standard Jewish mealtime prayer practice.
17. The verb echortasthēsan ('were satisfied, were filled') implies being fully fed, not merely having a taste. The twelve baskets (kophinoi) — one for each apostle — may symbolize God's provision for all twelve tribes of Israel. The kophinos was a distinctly Jewish wicker basket, different from the larger spuris used in the feeding of the four thousand.
18. Luke uniquely sets this pivotal scene in the context of prayer — kata monas ('alone') modified by the prayer participle. Luke consistently places major revelatory moments at times of prayer (baptism 3:21, Transfiguration 9:28-29, Gethsemane 22:41). The apparent paradox of being 'alone' yet 'with' the disciples likely means Jesus had been praying privately and the disciples then joined him, or that they were present but not praying.
19. The disciples relay the same three popular opinions reported in verses 7-8, forming a deliberate literary echo. These prophetic identifications, while honoring Jesus by placing him in exalted company, all fall short of the truth Peter is about to confess.
20. The emphatic hymeis ('but you') contrasts the disciples' personal knowledge with popular opinion. Peter's confession ton Christon tou theou ('the Christ of God') is more compact in Luke than in Matthew ('the Christ, the Son of the living God,' Matt 16:16). Luke's simpler form focuses on the messianic title itself — the Anointed One who belongs to God.
21. The verb epitimēsas ('rebuked, sternly warned') is the same word used for silencing demons (4:35, 41). The messianic secret motif — suppressing the Christ title — likely reflects the danger that popular messianic expectations (military deliverer, political king) would distort Jesus's mission before the cross redefines messiahship.
22. The word dei ('it is necessary, must') introduces divine necessity — this is not merely a prediction but a theological imperative rooted in God's plan. The title 'Son of Man' (ho huios tou anthrōpou) alludes to Daniel 7:13-14, where the 'one like a son of man' receives universal dominion. Jesus fuses this exalted figure with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 — a combination his contemporaries did not expect. The three groups named — elders, chief priests, scribes — compose the Sanhedrin.
22. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Daniel 7:13-14. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
22. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 53. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.

23. Luke alone adds *kath' hēmeran* ('daily') to the cross-bearing command, transforming it from a one-time act of martyrdom into an ongoing pattern of self-renunciation. The address 'to them all' (*pros pantas*) extends the invitation beyond the Twelve to the entire crowd. For a first-century hearer, 'take up his cross' was not a metaphor — it evoked the Roman practice of forcing condemned prisoners to carry the crossbeam to the execution site.
24. The Greek *psychē* means both 'life' and 'soul,' and Jesus exploits this double meaning. The person who clings to physical life (self-preservation) loses their true self, while the one who surrenders their life for Jesus's sake discovers authentic life. The paradox is structurally chiasmic: *save-lose / lose-save*.
25. Luke's version has 'lose or forfeit himself' (*heauton apolesys ē zēmiōtheis*) where Mark has 'his soul' — Luke makes it more personal and existential. The verb *zēmiōō* ('to suffer loss, to forfeit') is a commercial term: the image is of a catastrophic business deal where the gains cannot compensate for what was surrendered.
26. The triple glory — his own, the Father's, and the angels' — is unique to Luke and creates a vision of overwhelming majesty. The verb *epaischunthēsetai* ('will be ashamed of') establishes a principle of reciprocity: present shame leads to future shame. Jesus speaks of the Son of Man in the third person, which may indicate a distinction between his present humble state and his future glorified state, or may simply be the idiom of the title.
27. The expression 'taste death' (*geusōntai thanatou*) is a Semitic idiom meaning 'experience death.' This saying has been interpreted variously as referring to the Transfiguration (which follows immediately), the resurrection, Pentecost, the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, or the ongoing advance of God's reign. Luke's placement of this saying directly before the Transfiguration account may suggest he understood the Transfiguration as its primary fulfillment.
28. Luke says 'about eight days' where Mark and Matthew say 'after six days' — this is not a contradiction but reflects different counting conventions (Luke may include the bookend days). Luke uniquely notes that the purpose of ascending was prayer (*proseuxasthai*), consistent with his emphasis on Jesus at prayer before revelatory moments. Peter, John, and James form the inner circle present at key moments (also at Jairus's house, 8:51, and Gethsemane in Mark 14:33).
29. Luke says the 'appearance of his face changed' (to *eidōs tou prosōpou autou heteron*) rather than Mark's 'was transfigured' (*metemorphōthē*). Luke may avoid the Greek *metamorphosis* terminology because of its associations with pagan mythology for his Gentile audience. The adjective *exastraptōn* ('flashing like lightning, dazzling') suggests supernatural radiance, echoing the description of angels (Luke 24:4, Acts 1:10).
30. The phrase *idou* ('look, suddenly') marks the supernatural irruption. Moses represents the Law and Elijah the Prophets — together they embody the whole of Israel's Scripture bearing witness to Jesus. Both figures had unusual departures from earthly life: Moses was buried by God (Deuteronomy 34:6) and Elijah was taken up in a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:11).
30. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Deuteronomy 34:6 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
30. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 2 Kings 2:11 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
31. This verse is unique to Luke and is theologically momentous. The word *exodon* ('departure, exodus') is loaded with Old Testament resonance — Jesus's death in Jerusalem is framed as a new exodus, a liberation event parallel to Israel's deliverance from Egypt. The verb *plēroun* ('to fulfill, accomplish') indicates that this death is not merely an ending but a completion of divine purpose. Moses, who led the first exodus, now discusses the second with Jesus.
32. The detail of the disciples' sleepiness is unique to Luke and foreshadows their sleeping in Gethsemane (Luke 22:45). The verb *diagrēgorēsantes* ('having become fully awake') is rare and emphatic — despite their drowsiness, they were fully alert when they witnessed the glory. Luke may include this detail to establish that the vision was not a dream.
33. Luke uses *epistata* ('master, commander') rather than Mark's 'rabbi,' reflecting Luke's Gentile readership. The word *skēnas* ('tents, tabernacles, shelters') may allude to the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), when Israel commemorated God's dwelling with them in the wilderness. Peter's offer to build shelters, while well-intentioned, attempts to prolong and domesticate a revelatory moment. Luke's editorial note — 'not knowing what he was saying' — is a gentle correction of Peter's impulse.
34. The cloud (*nephelē*) recalls the pillar of cloud that guided Israel through the wilderness and the cloud of God's glory (*kavod/doxa*) that filled the tabernacle and temple (Exodus 40:34-35, 1 Kings 8:10-11). The verb *epeskiazēn* ('overshadowed') is the same verb used of the Holy Spirit overshadowing Mary (Luke 1:35), creating a connection between the incarnation and the Transfiguration. The disciples' fear at entering the cloud reflects the proper human response to divine presence.
34. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 40:34-35. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
34. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 1 Kings 8:10-11. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
35. Luke's reading has *ho eklelegmenos* ('the Chosen One') where Matthew and Mark have *ho agapētos* ('the Beloved'). This variant is well attested in the SBLGNT and echoes Isaiah 42:1, the first Servant Song: 'my chosen one in whom my soul delights.' The command 'listen to him' (*autou akouete*) echoes Deuteronomy 18:15, where Moses predicts a prophet like himself whom God will raise up: 'you shall listen to him.' The voice thus identifies Jesus as both the Servant of Isaiah and the Prophet like Moses.

35. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Isaiah 42:1 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
35. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Deuteronomy 18:15 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
36. The sudden disappearance of Moses and Elijah leaves Jesus alone — a visual demonstration of the voice's command to listen to him alone. The disciples' silence is voluntary in Luke (where in Mark 9:9, Jesus commands it), suggesting the experience was too overwhelming to articulate. The phrase 'in those days' implies they eventually did speak — Luke himself is reporting what they later testified.
37. Luke specifies 'the next day' (tē hexēs hēmera), a detail absent from Matthew and Mark. The descent from the mountain of glory to the chaos of the crowd below creates a deliberate contrast — from heaven's affirmation to earth's brokenness. The pattern echoes Moses descending from Sinai to find Israel in disorder (Exodus 32).
37. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 32. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
38. The word monogenēs ('only, unique, one and only') is the same term used of Jesus in John's Gospel (John 1:14, 18; 3:16). Luke uses it three times for human children (here, 7:12, 8:42), each time heightening the pathos — this father's only hope is in peril. The verb deomai ('I beg, I plead') conveys desperate urgency.
39. The father's description is vivid and medically detailed: seizure (lambanei), sudden screaming (exaiphnēs krazei), convulsions (sparassei), foaming (aphrou), and physical damage (syntribon, 'crushing, bruising'). The symptoms described overlap with what modern medicine would classify as epileptic seizures, though Luke attributes the cause to a spirit (pneuma). The verb mogis ('scarcely, with difficulty') suggests the spirit is reluctant to release the boy even temporarily.
40. The disciples' failure is especially striking given that Jesus had delegated power and authority over all demons to them (v. 1). Their inability raises the question of what has gone wrong — a question Jesus addresses in the next verse with sharp disappointment.
41. The exclamation echoes Moses' frustration with Israel in Deuteronomy 32:5, 20 — the 'twisted generation' (genea diestrammenē) language comes directly from the Song of Moses. Jesus's exasperation is directed broadly at 'this generation,' not solely at the disciples. The rhetorical question 'how long?' expresses the pain of divine patience with unbelief, similar to God's lament in Numbers 14:11.
41. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Deuteronomy 32:5. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
41. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Numbers 14:11. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
42. The demon's violent attack as the boy approaches Jesus represents a last desperate assault. The verb apedōken ('gave back, restored') is tender — Jesus returns the child to his father as a gift, restoring the family unit that the demon had torn apart. This same verb was used when Elijah restored the widow's son (1 Kings 17:23 LXX), and Luke may intend the echo.
42. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 1 Kings 17:23. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
43. The word megalioteeti ('majesty, grandeur, greatness') appears only here and in Acts 19:27 and 2 Peter 1:16 in the New Testament. Luke's framing is significant: the crowd attributes the miracle to God's majesty, not to Jesus's personal power. Jesus immediately pivots from this moment of popular acclaim to another passion prediction — a jarring juxtaposition that Luke leaves unresolved.
44. The idiom thesthe eis ta ōta hymōn ('place into your ears') means 'listen carefully and remember.' The passive paradidosthai ('to be delivered, to be handed over') implies divine agency — God is the unstated subject who will deliver his Son. The wordplay between 'Son of Man' (huios tou anthrōpou) and 'hands of men' (cheiras anthrōpōn) creates an ironic contrast: the heavenly Man will be subjected to merely human power.
45. Luke presents a threefold failure: ignorance (ēgnooun), concealment (parakekalymmenon), and fear (ephobounto). The passive 'it was concealed' (ēn parakekalymmenon) suggests divine hiddenness — God has temporarily veiled the meaning. This is not merely intellectual failure but a divinely ordered inability that will persist until the resurrection opens their understanding (Luke 24:45). Their fear of asking reveals they sense the gravity of Jesus's words even without comprehending them.
46. The juxtaposition is brutal: Jesus has just predicted his death and the disciples immediately argue about rank. The word dialogismos ('reasoning, argument, dispute') can mean an internal thought or an external debate — the context suggests it became vocal, since Jesus responds to it. This scene exposes how thoroughly the disciples have misunderstood the nature of Jesus's messiahship.
47. Jesus's perception of their hearts (eidōs ton dialogismon tēs kardias autōn) demonstrates supernatural knowledge. The physical placement of the child 'beside him' (par' heautō) is a visual lesson: the child occupies the position of honor, the very position the disciples were arguing about.
48. Jesus establishes a chain of representation: child Jesus God. Welcoming the powerless is equivalent to welcoming God himself. The paradox 'the least is great' (ho mikroteros... houtos estin megas) directly inverts the disciples' argument. In the ancient world, children had no social status or power — they were the definitional 'least.' Jesus redefines greatness as service to those with nothing to offer in return.

49. John's concern is about institutional boundaries — 'he does not follow with us' (ouk akolouthei meth' hēmōn). The irony is sharp: the disciples who could not cast out the demon in verse 40 are trying to prevent someone who can. Luke uses epistata ('master') rather than Mark's didaskale ('teacher'), consistent with his pattern for the disciples' address of Jesus.
50. The principle 'whoever is not against you is for you' (hos gar ouk estin kath' hymōn hyper hymōn estin) appears to contradict Luke 11:23 ('whoever is not with me is against me'). The two sayings address different situations: here, the point is tolerance toward allies working outside the inner circle; in 11:23, the point is that neutrality toward Jesus himself is not possible. Jesus refuses to restrict God's work to his own followers' circle.
51. This verse marks the decisive turning point of Luke's Gospel, initiating the 'Travel Narrative' (9:51-19:27). The phrase to prosōpon estērisen ('set his face firmly') echoes Isaiah 50:7 (Servant Song): 'I have set my face like flint.' The word analēmpseōs ('taking up, ascension') encompasses not just the ascension but the entire complex of death-resurrection-ascension. Luke views these as a single redemptive event. Jesus moves toward his destiny with deliberate resolve, not reluctant submission.
51. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 50:7. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
52. The phrase angelous pro prosōpou autou ('messengers before his face') echoes Malachi 3:1, where God sends a messenger before his face. The route through Samaria was the most direct path from Galilee to Jerusalem but was avoided by many Jews due to the Samaritan-Jewish hostility. Jesus's choice of this route is itself a statement.
52. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Malachi 3:1. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
53. The Samaritans' refusal is theological, not personal: they reject him because Jerusalem is his destination. The Samaritan-Jewish schism centered on rival worship sites — Mount Gerizim versus the Jerusalem temple (cf. John 4:20). A Jewish pilgrim traveling to Jerusalem represented everything the Samaritans opposed. The phrase 'his face was going toward Jerusalem' preserves the Semitic idiom of v. 51.
54. James and John's proposal alludes to Elijah calling fire from heaven on the soldiers of King Ahaziah (2 Kings 1:10-12) — a connection made explicit in some manuscripts though not in the SBLGNT. The irony is layered: they have just witnessed the Transfiguration with Elijah and now want to play Elijah themselves. Their desire for destructive judgment is precisely the kind of messianic power Jesus is rejecting by heading toward the cross.
54. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 2 Kings 1:10-12. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
55. The SBLGNT contains only the brief rebuke without the additional words found in some later manuscripts ('You do not know what spirit you are of' and 'The Son of Man came not to destroy lives but to save them'). While these additions express authentic Lukan theology, we follow the critical text. The physical turning (strapheis) suggests Jesus had been walking ahead and deliberately turned back to correct them.
56. The matter-of-fact simplicity of this verse contrasts sharply with the disciples' violent proposal. Jesus does not retaliate, does not curse the village, does not even complain — he simply moves on. This models the non-retaliatory ethic that will characterize his teaching in the Travel Narrative.
57. This begins a series of three encounters with would-be followers (vv. 57-62), each illustrating a different obstacle to discipleship. The first volunteer is enthusiastic but uninformed about the cost. Luke does not identify this person (Matthew 8:19 says 'a scribe'), keeping the encounter universal — any reader can see themselves here.
58. The contrast is between the most common animals (foxes, birds) and the Son of Man — even creatures with no social standing have shelter, but the one to whom Daniel 7 promises universal dominion lives as a homeless itinerant. The phrase 'birds of the sky' (ta peteina tou ouranou) is a Septuagint expression. Jesus does not refuse the volunteer but ensures he understands the cost.
58. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Daniel 7 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
59. Unlike the first volunteer, this person is called by Jesus but hesitates. Burying one's father was considered the most sacred obligation in Jewish culture — it took precedence over virtually all other religious duties, even Torah study and temple service (cf. Mishnah Berakhot 3:1). The request may mean the father has just died, or it may be an idiom for 'let me wait until my father dies and I've fulfilled my family obligations.'
60. This is one of the most shocking sayings in the Gospels. 'Let the dead bury their own dead' uses 'dead' in two senses: the spiritually dead can attend to the physically dead. The command to prioritize kingdom proclamation over the most sacred family duty would have been deeply offensive in first-century Jewish culture. Jesus is not callous — he is asserting that the kingdom's arrival creates an unprecedented urgency that relativizes even the most honored obligations.
61. The third encounter — unique to Luke — echoes Elisha's call by Elijah in 1 Kings 19:19-21, where Elisha asked to kiss his parents goodbye and Elijah permitted it. The request seems entirely reasonable, which makes Jesus's response in the next verse all the more startling. The verb apotaxasthai ('to say farewell, to take leave of') implies a formal departure, not a quick wave.
61. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Kings 19:19-21. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
62. The agricultural image is precise: a farmer plowing with a wooden plow and a team of oxen must look ahead to maintain a straight furrow. Looking backward produces a crooked line and wastes the field. The verb euthetos ('fit, suitable, useful') implies that backward-looking discipleship is not merely imperfect but useless for kingdom work. The implicit contrast with Elisha's call is significant: what Elijah permitted, Jesus does not —

because the kingdom's demands exceed even the prophetic calling.

10

Summary: *Luke 10 opens with Jesus sending out seventy-two disciples on a broader mission, paralleling but expanding the commissioning of the Twelve in chapter 9. The chapter contains the famous parable of the Good Samaritan — Jesus's answer to the question 'Who is my neighbor?' — which redefines love of neighbor by making a despised outsider the moral hero. The chapter closes with the contrasting portraits of Martha and Mary in Bethany, where Jesus affirms that attentive listening to his word is the 'one thing needed.' Between these memorable narratives, Jesus rejoices in the Spirit, pronounces blessings on the disciples for what they see and hear, and reveals the intimate mutual knowledge between Father and Son.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The sending of the seventy-two (or seventy, depending on the manuscript tradition) likely alludes to the seventy elders of Israel (Numbers 11:16-25) or the seventy nations of Genesis 10, suggesting a mission that extends beyond Israel. The Good Samaritan parable is uniquely Lukan and is one of the most culturally influential stories in Western civilization. Its placement as the answer to 'Who is my neighbor?' transforms a question about the limits of obligation into a challenge about becoming the kind of person who shows mercy. The Mary and Martha story, also unique to Luke, elevates the role of women as disciples who learn at a rabbi's feet — a radical social claim in the first century.*

Translation Friction: *The number seventy-two versus seventy is a well-known textual variant; the SBLGNT reads seventy-two (hebdomekonta duo). The lawyer's question in v. 25 uses ekpeirazon ('testing'), a verb with hostile overtones, yet Jesus engages him seriously. The Samaritan parable would have been profoundly offensive to a Jewish audience — making a Samaritan the moral exemplar over a priest and a Levite was a deliberate provocation. The Martha/Mary episode has been read as privileging contemplation over action, but Luke's point is more nuanced: Martha's distraction (periespato) is the problem, not her service (diakonia) itself.*

Connections: *The commissioning echoes and expands the Twelve's mission (Luke 9:1-6). Jesus's rejoicing in the Spirit (v. 21) connects to his programmatic Spirit-anointing in Luke 4:18. The Good Samaritan parable reinterprets Leviticus 19:18 ('love your neighbor as yourself') and draws on the Samaritan theme Luke has been developing (9:52-56). The Mary/Martha story anticipates the theme of faithful hearing that runs through Luke's Travel Narrative. The woe oracles over Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum echo Old Testament prophetic judgment oracles.*

¹After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him into every town and place where he himself was about to go. ²He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest. ³Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. ⁴Carry no money bag, no traveler's bag, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. ⁵Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' ⁶If a person of peace is there, your peace will rest on that person. But if not, it will return to you. ⁷Stay in that same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move from house to house. ⁸Whenever you enter a town and they welcome you, eat what is set before you. ⁹Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' ¹⁰But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹'Even the dust from your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. But know this: the kingdom of God has come near.' ¹²I tell you, on that day it will be more bearable for Sodom than for that town. ¹³"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴But it will be easier for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment, than it will be for you. ¹⁵And you, Capernaum — will you be exalted to heaven? You will be brought down to Hades. ¹⁶Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me, and whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me." ¹⁷The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name!" ¹⁸He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. ¹⁹Look, I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will harm

you in any way. ²⁰Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." ²¹In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this was your gracious will. ²²All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." ²³Then turning to the disciples privately, he said, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. ²⁴For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see and did not see it, and to hear what you hear and did not hear it." ²⁵Then a legal expert stood up to test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" ²⁷He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." ²⁸He said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live." ²⁹But wanting to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers. They stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹By coincidence, a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³²Likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³But a Samaritan who was traveling came upon him, and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. ³⁴He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he placed him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' ³⁶Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" ³⁷He said, "The one who showed mercy to him." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." ³⁸As they continued on their way, he entered a certain village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and was listening to his word. ⁴⁰But Martha was distracted by all her preparations. She came to him and said, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her to help me!" ⁴¹The Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴²However, one thing is needful — and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The textual variant between 'seventy' and 'seventy-two' (hebdomēkonta duo) is one of the most debated in Luke. The SBLGNT reads seventy-two. Seventy may allude to the elders appointed by Moses (Numbers 11:16-25), while seventy-two may reflect the number of nations in the Septuagint's version of Genesis 10, suggesting a universal mission scope. Sending in pairs follows the Old Testament principle that testimony requires two witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15).
1. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Numbers 11:16-25. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
1. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 10. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
1. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Deuteronomy 19:15. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
2. The harvest metaphor draws on Old Testament prophetic imagery where harvest represents God's gathering of people (cf. Joel 3:13, Isaiah 27:12). The verb *ekbalē* ('to throw out, to send out forcefully') is surprisingly strong — the same word used for casting out demons. God must thrust workers into the field; they will not go on their own initiative.
2. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Joel 3:13. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
2. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 27:12. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
3. The image of lambs (*arnas*) among wolves is more vulnerable than Matthew's 'sheep' (*probata*, Matt 10:16). Lambs are younger, weaker, more defenseless. The present tense *apostellō* ('I am sending') conveys immediacy. The mission is deliberately risky — Jesus does not promise safety but commissions them into danger.

4. The prohibition against greeting people on the road does not reflect rudeness but urgency — Near Eastern greetings were elaborate, time-consuming social rituals. Elisha gave the same instruction to Gehazi (2 Kings 4:29). The three prohibited items (purse, bag, sandals) strip the missionaries of all provision and self-sufficiency, forcing reliance on God's provision through hospitality.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes 2 Kings 4:29. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
5. The greeting *eirēnē tō oikō toutō* ('peace to this house') reflects the Hebrew *shalom* greeting. In this context, it is not merely a pleasantry but a performative blessing — the peace carried by the messengers of the kingdom is an actual spiritual reality that can rest on a household or return to the messenger (v. 6).
6. The Semitic expression *huios eirēnēs* ('son of peace') means a person characterized by peace, one who is receptive to the kingdom message. The concept of peace as a quasi-physical force that can 'rest on' someone or 'return' to the sender reflects the Hebrew understanding of a spoken blessing as having real power — a word once released either finds its target or comes back.
7. The principle 'the worker deserves his wages' (*axios ho ergatēs tou misthou autou*) establishes that hospitality for kingdom workers is not charity but fair compensation for spiritual labor. Paul quotes this saying as authoritative in 1 Timothy 5:18, placing it on the level of Scripture. The prohibition against moving between houses prevents the appearance of seeking luxury or playing hosts against each other.
8. The instruction to eat 'what is set before you' (*ta paratithemena hymin*) may have significance beyond mere hospitality — for Jewish missionaries entering Gentile or Samaritan homes, this could mean eating food not prepared according to Jewish dietary laws. If so, the instruction anticipates the breaking down of food boundaries that becomes explicit in Acts 10.
9. The combination of healing and proclamation demonstrates that the kingdom of God is not merely a verbal announcement but a present reality that transforms bodies and communities. The perfect tense *ēngiken* ('has come near, has arrived') indicates a completed approach — the kingdom is not distant but has reached their doorstep through the messengers' presence and power.
10. The public declaration in the streets (*plateias*, 'broad streets, public squares') transforms the rejection into a witnessed prophetic act. The messengers are not to slink away in shame but to make a formal, visible proclamation of judgment.
11. The dust-wiping gesture is more detailed here than in 9:5, with the addition of 'that clings to our feet' (*ton kollēthenta hēmin ek tēs poleōs hymōn eis tous podas*), emphasizing thoroughness of separation. The ironic twist is that the kingdom's nearness remains true regardless of the town's response — their rejection does not prevent God's reign from arriving, only their participation in it.
12. Sodom was the quintessential symbol of divine judgment in Jewish thought (Genesis 19). To say that any town's fate will be worse than Sodom's is the most severe warning imaginable. The logic is one of accountability: Sodom never received kingdom messengers with healing power, so rejecting such messengers incurs greater responsibility.
12. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 19. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
13. Chorazin and Bethsaida were Galilean towns near Capernaum where Jesus had ministered extensively. Tyre and Sidon were Gentile coastal cities that the Old Testament prophets condemned (Isaiah 23, Ezekiel 26-28). The argument from lesser to greater is devastating: pagan cities under prophetic judgment would have repented if given what these Jewish towns received. Sackcloth and ashes were the traditional signs of mourning and repentance.
13. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 23 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
13. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Ezekiel 26-28 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
14. The phrase *en tē krisei* ('at the judgment') refers to the eschatological final judgment. Jesus implies graduated accountability — greater privilege brings greater responsibility and thus more severe judgment for rejection. The comparative *anektoterōn* ('more bearable, more tolerable') suggests degrees of judgment rather than a uniform outcome.
15. The language echoes Isaiah 14:13-15, the taunt against the king of Babylon who sought to ascend to heaven but was brought down to Sheol. Capernaum was Jesus's base of operations in Galilee (Luke 4:31) and had received more of his teaching and miracles than any other town. The Greek *hadēs* translates the Hebrew *Sheol* — the realm of the dead, not the later Christian concept of hell as a place of punishment.
15. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Isaiah 14:13-15 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
16. This verse establishes a chain of representation parallel to 9:48 but in the negative direction: messenger → Jesus → God. The verb *athetōn* ('rejects, sets aside, nullifies') is a legal term meaning to declare something invalid or to annul a contract. Rejecting the messengers is not merely a social offense but a rejection of divine authority. The sending language (*ton aposteilanta me*) affirms Jesus's own identity as the sent one of God.
17. The disciples' report focuses on demonic submission (*hypotassetai*, 'submit, are subject to') — the one result that most astonished them. Their joy is genuine but slightly misdirected, as Jesus will redirect their attention in v. 20. The phrase 'in your name' (*en tō onomati sou*) indicates they acted not by their own power but as authorized representatives of Jesus.

- 18.** The imperfect *etheōroun* ('I was watching, I kept seeing') suggests Jesus was observing in real time as the disciples were on their mission. The imagery of Satan falling like lightning combines the speed and brilliance of a lightning strike with the finality of a fall. This may allude to Isaiah 14:12 (the fall of the 'morning star') or may describe a visionary experience of Satan's cosmic defeat being enacted through the disciples' mission.
- 18.** [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 14:12 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
- 19.** The perfect tense *dedōka* ('I have given') indicates an accomplished and continuing gift. Snakes and scorpions function both literally (protection from physical danger) and symbolically (power over demonic forces, cf. the serpent of Genesis 3). The phrase *pasan tēn dynamin tou echthrou* ('all the power of the enemy') identifies Satan as 'the enemy' and declares his complete subordination to the authority Jesus delegates. The double negative *ou mē* ('by no means, absolutely not') is the strongest negation in Greek.
- 19.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Genesis 3. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 20.** Jesus redirects their joy from what they can do (power over spirits) to what God has done (inscribing their names in heaven). The perfect passive *engegraptai* ('have been written and remain written') indicates a permanent record. The image of names written in heaven draws on the Old Testament concept of God's book (Exodus 32:32-33, Daniel 12:1, Psalm 69:28). The point is that identity and security in God's eternal record matters more than spiritual power.
- 20.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 32:32-33 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 20.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Daniel 12:1 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 20.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Psalm 69:28 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 21.** Luke alone specifies that Jesus rejoiced 'in the Holy Spirit' (*en tō pneumati tō hagiō*), one of the rare moments where Jesus's own emotional experience is described in terms of the Spirit's activity. The verb *ēgalliasato* ('rejoiced greatly, exulted') denotes intense, exuberant joy. The prayer follows the Jewish *todah* (thanksgiving) form. The 'wise and intelligent' (*sophōn kai synetōn*) may refer to religious scholars whose learning becomes an obstacle, while 'infants' (*nēpiois*) represents the unlettered disciples whose openness allows revelation.
- 22.** This verse, sometimes called the 'Johannine thunderbolt' because it sounds more like John's Gospel than the Synoptics, asserts mutual exclusive knowledge between Father and Son. The verb *paredothē* ('have been handed over') implies total delegation of authority. The claim of reciprocal knowing — only the Father knows the Son, only the Son knows the Father — places Jesus in a relationship with God that is unique and unparalleled. The Son's sovereign choice in revelation (*boulētai*, 'wills, chooses') makes him the sole mediator of knowledge of God.
- 23.** The beatitude form (*makarioi*, 'blessed, fortunate, to be envied') frames the disciples' experience as a supreme privilege. The physical turning (*straphēis*) signals a shift from public prayer to private instruction. The emphasis on seeing (*ophthalmoi... blepontes... blepete*) highlights the revelatory nature of the disciples' experience — they are witnessing what centuries of faithful people longed to see.
- 24.** Luke says 'prophets and kings' where Matthew 13:17 says 'prophets and righteous people' — Luke's version may be more pointed, since kings like David and Solomon, despite their power and privilege, never witnessed the messianic fulfillment. The disciples, simple Galileans, are more privileged than Israel's greatest leaders. The parallel structure (see/did not see, hear/did not hear) creates a chiasm of privilege and longing.
- 25.** The *nomikos* ('legal expert, lawyer') was an expert in the Torah, not a secular attorney. The verb *ekpeirazōn* ('testing, putting to the test') carries hostile undertones — this is an attempt to trap Jesus, not a sincere inquiry (though Jesus transforms it into genuine teaching). The question about inheriting eternal life assumes that eternal life is an inheritance, something received from a prior relationship rather than earned — a covenant concept.
- 26.** Jesus's counter-question is a classic rabbinic technique — answering a question with a question that directs the questioner back to Scripture. The double question ('what is written?' and 'how do you read?') distinguishes between the text itself and the interpreter's understanding of it. As a Torah expert, the lawyer should already know the answer.
- 27.** The lawyer combines the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:5) with Leviticus 19:18, joining love of God with love of neighbor into a single commandment. In Luke's account, it is the lawyer who produces this synthesis (in Mark 12:29-31, Jesus gives it). The fourfold formula (heart, soul, strength, mind) slightly expands the Hebrew original, with 'mind' (*dianoia*) added to the traditional three, perhaps reflecting the Septuagint tradition.
- 27.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Deuteronomy 6:5. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 27.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Leviticus 19:18. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 28.** Jesus's response echoes Leviticus 18:5: 'Keep my statutes... by which, if a person does them, he will live.' The imperative 'do this' (*touto poiei*) shifts the conversation from theory to practice — knowing the right answer is not enough. The present tense *poiei* implies ongoing, habitual action, not a one-time performance.
- 28.** [TCR Cross-Reference] References Leviticus 18:5: — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.

29. The phrase *thelōn dikaiōsai heauton* ('wanting to justify himself') reveals the lawyer's motivation — he seeks to define 'neighbor' narrowly enough that he can claim compliance. The question 'who is my neighbor?' asks for the limits of obligation: who can I legitimately exclude? Jesus's parable will invert the question entirely: instead of asking 'who qualifies as my neighbor?' the question becomes 'to whom am I willing to be a neighbor?'
30. The Jerusalem-to-Jericho road descended about 3,400 feet over roughly seventeen miles through desolate, rocky terrain notorious for banditry. The word *lēstais* ('robbers, bandits') denotes violent criminals, not petty thieves (*kleptai*). The victim is deliberately left unidentified — no name, no ethnicity, no social status — so that the story cannot be limited to any particular group. Stripped and half dead, the man's identity cannot be determined by his clothing or speech, making the response to him purely a matter of mercy versus indifference.
31. The phrase *kata synkyrian* ('by coincidence') is used only here in the New Testament and frames the encounters as unplanned — this is not a setup but a test of character in an unexpected moment. The priest's avoidance (*antiparēlthen*, 'passed by on the opposite side') may have been motivated by purity concerns: contact with a corpse would render him ritually unclean (Leviticus 21:1-3), and the man appeared to be dead. However, Jesus's parable implies no excuse is adequate when a life hangs in the balance.
31. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Leviticus 21:1-3. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
32. The Levite's behavior mirrors the priest's — seeing (*idōn*) and passing by (*antiparēlthen*). The Levites were a secondary priestly class who served in the temple. Together, priest and Levite represent the religious establishment of Israel. The pattern of two religious figures failing creates the expectation that the third character will be an ordinary Israelite who succeeds — making the Samaritan identity in verse 33 a deliberate shock.
33. The word *esplanchnisthē* ('was moved with compassion, felt it in his guts') is one of the strongest emotional verbs in Greek — it refers to a visceral, gut-level response. In the Gospels, this verb is used primarily of Jesus himself (7:13, 15:20). The Samaritan sees the same wounded man the priest and Levite saw, but his seeing produces a fundamentally different response. For a first-century Jewish audience, making a Samaritan the hero would have been deeply offensive — Samaritans were considered heretical half-breeds (cf. John 4:9, 8:48).
34. The care is described in meticulous detail: approaching, bandaging, applying medicine (oil to soothe, wine to disinfect), mounting the man on his own animal (meaning the Samaritan walked), transporting him to an inn, and personally nursing him. Each action represents a personal cost — time, supplies, transportation, and the risk of being a Samaritan caring for a possibly Jewish stranger in hostile territory. The *pandocheion* ('inn') was a commercial establishment, not private hospitality.
35. Two denarii represented about two days' wages for a laborer and could cover roughly two weeks of lodging and food. The Samaritan's open-ended promise — 'whatever more you spend, I will repay' — represents an unlimited financial commitment to a stranger. The verb *prosdapanēsēs* ('spend in addition') indicates he expects the care to exceed the initial payment. The promise to return creates ongoing accountability.
36. Jesus's question brilliantly inverts the lawyer's original question. The lawyer asked 'who is my neighbor?' (who must I help?) — Jesus asks 'who proved to be a neighbor?' (who acted with mercy?). The question is no longer about the identity of the recipient but about the character of the responder. The verb *gegonenai* ('proved to be, became') suggests that being a neighbor is not a status but an action.
37. The lawyer cannot bring himself to say 'the Samaritan' — he answers with a circumlocution: 'the one who showed mercy' (*ho poiēsas to eleos*). The word *eleos* ('mercy, compassion') echoes the Septuagint's vocabulary for God's own compassion. Jesus's final command — 'go and do likewise' (*poreuou kai sy poiei homoiōs*) — turns the theological question into a practical mandate. The 'likewise' (*homoiōs*) means: be like the Samaritan. For a Jewish lawyer, this is a radical reorientation.
38. Luke does not name the village, though John 11:1 identifies Martha's home as Bethany, near Jerusalem. The verb *hypedexato* ('welcomed, received as a guest') indicates hospitality — Martha is the householder who opens her home. Luke places this domestic scene immediately after the Good Samaritan parable, creating a pairing: the parable teaches about active mercy, while the Martha/Mary story teaches about receptive listening. Both are needed.
39. The phrase *parakathētheisa pros tous podas tou kyriou* ('seated at the Lord's feet') is the technical posture of a rabbinic disciple — Paul describes himself as educated 'at the feet of Gamaliel' (Acts 22:3). For a woman to assume this posture was socially radical; women were not typically accepted as students of Torah. Luke presents Mary as a full disciple. The imperfect *ēkouden* ('was listening, kept listening') suggests sustained, absorbed attention.
40. The verb *periespato* ('was distracted, was pulled in different directions') suggests that Martha's many tasks were fragmenting her attention rather than centering it. The word *diakonia* ('service, ministry') is significant — it is the root of 'deacon' and is a valued activity in Luke-Acts. Martha's service is not condemned; her distraction is. Her complaint addresses Jesus rather than Mary directly, asking him to arbitrate — and her tone reveals frustration bordering on accusation: 'don't you care?' (*ou melel soi*).
41. The double name 'Martha, Martha' (Martha Martha) is a form of address that conveys gentle concern and intimacy — compare 'Simon, Simon' (Luke 22:31) and 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem' (Luke 13:34). The two verbs *merimnās* ('you are anxious, worried') and *thorybazē* ('you are troubled, agitated') describe an internal state of fragmentation. Jesus does not criticize Martha's service but her anxiety — the inner turmoil that has overtaken her.
42. The phrase *henos estin chreia* ('one thing is necessary') is textually debated — some manuscripts read 'few things are necessary, or only one' (*oligōn de estin chreia ē henos*). The SBLGNT reading is the most concise. The word *merida* ('portion, share, part') may carry meal imagery — while Martha is busy with many dishes, Mary has chosen the one dish that matters. The passive 'will not be taken away' (*ouk aphairēthēsetai*) implies divine protection of Mary's choice. Jesus affirms that attentive hearing of the word takes priority, though he does not condemn Martha's service itself.

11

Summary: *Luke 11 centers on prayer, spiritual warfare, and confrontation with religious hypocrisy. The chapter opens with Jesus teaching the Lord's Prayer in its shorter Lukan form, followed by the parable of the persistent friend and the promise that God gives good gifts to those who ask. The middle section addresses the Beelzebul controversy — Jesus's defense against the charge that he casts out demons by demonic power — and includes the parable of the strong man and the warning about the return of unclean spirits. The chapter closes with a series of sharp woe pronouncements against the Pharisees and legal experts, attacking their obsession with external purity while neglecting justice and the love of God.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke's Lord's Prayer is significantly shorter than Matthew's version (five petitions versus seven), likely reflecting an earlier or more compressed tradition. The prayer arises naturally from watching Jesus pray — a uniquely Lukan setting. The Beelzebul controversy is one of the most theologically charged episodes in the Gospels, as Jesus argues that his exorcisms are evidence that the kingdom of God has arrived. The six woes (three against Pharisees, three against lawyers) form one of the fiercest prophetic denunciations in the New Testament, echoing the 'woe' oracles of Isaiah and Amos. Luke's placement of these woes at a Pharisee's dinner table heightens the social tension dramatically.*

Translation Friction: *The differences between Luke's Lord's Prayer and Matthew's have generated extensive scholarly discussion. We render Luke's text as it stands without harmonizing with Matthew. The phrase 'your kingdom come' in some manuscripts is followed by a variant reading requesting the Holy Spirit, which reflects early liturgical practice but is not in the SBLGNT. The Beelzebul passage raises difficult questions about the 'unforgivable sin' (blasphemy against the Holy Spirit), though Luke's version is less explicit on this than Mark's. The woe pronouncements present Jesus in a confrontational prophetic mode that may surprise readers accustomed to 'gentle Jesus.'*

Connections: *The Lord's Prayer connects to Jesus's own prayer life (3:21, 5:16, 6:12, 9:18, 9:28-29). The Beelzebul controversy draws on Old Testament language about 'the finger of God' (Exodus 8:19). The sign of Jonah connects to the Jonah narrative and the repentance of Nineveh. The lamp saying (v. 33-36) echoes the same imagery in 8:16. The woes parallel Matthew 23 but in a different narrative context. The reference to Abel's blood to Zechariah's blood spans the Hebrew canon from Genesis to Chronicles.*

1He was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." 2He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, let your name be held holy. Let your kingdom come. 3Give us each day our daily bread. 4Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us into temptation.'" 5Then he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, 6Because a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set prior to him? 7And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything.' 8I tell you, even if he will not get up and give him anything because of their friendship, yet because of his shameless persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs. 9So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you. 10For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 11What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" 14He was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the crowds were amazed. 15But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of demons." 16Others, testing him, demanded a sign from heaven. 17But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a house divided against itself falls. 18If Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. 19If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. 20But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 21When a strong man,

fully armed, guards his own courtyard, his possessions are secure. ²²But when one stronger than he attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the full armor in which the strong man trusted and distributes his plunder. ²³Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. ²⁴"When an unclean spirit goes out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' ²⁵When it arrives, it finds the house swept and put in order. ²⁶Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and settle there. And the final condition of that person becomes worse than the first." ²⁷As he was saying these things, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you!" ²⁸But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" ²⁹As the crowds were increasing, he began to say, "This generation is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah. ³⁰For just as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation. ³¹The queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear Solomon's wisdom — and look, something greater than Solomon is here. ³²The people of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah — and look, something greater than Jonah is here. ³³"No one lights a lamp and puts it in a hidden place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light. ³⁴Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light. But when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. ³⁵Therefore be careful that the light in you is not darkness. ³⁶If then your whole body is full of light, with no part dark, it will be entirely full of light, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light." ³⁷While he was speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him. So he went in and reclined at the table. ³⁸The Pharisee was surprised to see that he did not first wash before the meal. ³⁹The Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰Fools! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? ⁴¹But give what is inside as charity, and then everything is clean for you. ⁴²But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, but you neglect justice and the love of God. These you should have done without neglecting the others. ⁴³Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and the greetings in the marketplaces. ⁴⁴Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and the people who walk over them do not realize it." ⁴⁵One of the legal experts answered him, "Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us too." ⁴⁶He said, "Woe to you legal experts as well! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, but you yourselves will not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. ⁴⁷Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. ⁴⁸So you are witnesses and you approve of the deeds of your fathers, because they killed them and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹For this reason the wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute,' ⁵⁰That the lifeblood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the present age, may be required of this generation. ⁵¹In deed, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple — truly I tell you, it will be required of this generation. ⁵²Woe to you legal experts! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering." ⁵³When he left there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, ⁵⁴They watched him closely, trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. Luke uniquely grounds the Lord's Prayer in Jesus's own practice of prayer — the disciples see him praying and want to learn. The reference to John the Baptist teaching his disciples to pray indicates that distinctive prayers functioned as community identity markers; rabbinic schools and prophetic movements each had their own prayer traditions. The request is not simply for words to say but for a way of approaching God that distinguishes Jesus's community.
2. Luke's address is simply Pater ('Father') without Matthew's 'Our Father who is in heaven.' The bare 'Father' may reflect the Aramaic Abba, the intimate family address that Jesus used for God. The aorist passive hagiasthētō ('let it be made holy, let it be sanctified') is a divine passive — the petition asks God to act to hallow his own name, to cause his holiness to be recognized and honored. Luke omits Matthew's 'your will be done on earth as in heaven,' though the petition is implicit in 'let your kingdom come.'

3. The word *epiousios* ('daily') is one of the rarest words in Greek — it appears almost nowhere outside the Lord's Prayer, and its exact meaning is debated. Possible meanings include: 'for the coming day' (from *epi* + *ienai*, 'for tomorrow'), 'necessary for existence' (from *epi* + *ousia*, 'for being'), or 'supersubstantial' (a patristic reading connecting it to spiritual nourishment). The present tense *didou* ('keep giving') with 'each day' (to *kath' hēmeran*) in Luke's version (versus Matthew's aorist *dos*, 'give today') emphasizes ongoing daily dependence, echoing the daily manna provision in the wilderness.
4. Luke uses *hamartias* ('sins') where Matthew has *opheilēmata* ('debts'). Luke's version then switches to debt language in the second clause (*opheilonti*, 'indebted to'), creating a mixed metaphor that reveals the underlying connection: sins are debts owed to God. The present tense *aphiomen* ('we forgive') indicates habitual practice, not a one-time act. Luke omits Matthew's final petition 'but deliver us from evil/the evil one.' The petition about temptation (*peirasmon*) asks not to be led into a situation of testing that could overwhelm faith — the same word will appear in Jesus's Gethsemane warning (22:40, 46).
5. This parable is unique to Luke. The scenario assumes a Palestinian village where hospitality is a communal obligation — a host who cannot provide for an unexpected guest would bring shame on the entire village. The midnight hour (*mesonyktiou*) heightens the inconvenience. Three loaves would constitute a modest meal for one person.
6. The traveler's arrival 'from a journey' (*ex hodou*) at midnight was common in the ancient Near East, where people traveled in the cooler night hours to avoid the heat. The host's confession 'I have nothing' (*ouk echō*) creates urgency — hospitality failure was a serious social disgrace in this culture.
7. The reply from inside paints a realistic picture of a one-room peasant house where the entire family slept on a raised platform or mat. Opening the door and getting bread would mean stepping over sleeping children, unbarring the door, and fumbling in the dark. The perfect tense *kekleistai* ('has been locked and remains locked') emphasizes the finality of the closure.
8. The key word *anaideian* has been traditionally translated 'importunity' or 'persistence,' but it literally means 'shamelessness, lack of shame.' The argument is from lesser to greater (*qal wahomer*): if a reluctant neighbor responds to shameless persistence, how much more will God — who is not reluctant — respond to persistent prayer? God is not the reluctant friend; the parable contrasts human reluctance with divine generosity.
9. The three imperatives (*aiteite, zēteite, krouete*) are all present tense, indicating continuous action: 'keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking.' The escalating verbs suggest increasing effort and urgency. The divine passives (*dothēsetai*, 'it will be given'; *anoigēsetai*, 'it will be opened') indicate God as the agent. The promise is absolute in form, though the context (vv. 11-13) clarifies that God gives what is genuinely good.
10. The universal qualifier *pas* ('everyone') removes any limitation — the promise is not restricted to the pious, the worthy, or the experienced. The shift from imperative (v. 9) to indicative (v. 10) moves from command to assurance: this is not merely what you should do, but what actually happens. The present tenses (*lambanei, heuriskei*) describe a reliable pattern, not an occasional exception.
11. The SBLGNT text here differs from some manuscripts. Some include the bread/stone comparison found in Matthew 7:9, but the critical text begins with the fish/snake pair. The items are chosen for their visual similarity — a snake could resemble a fish, an egg could resemble a stone — making the substitution conceivable but cruel. The argument assumes that human fathers, despite their imperfection, would never deliberately harm their children.
12. The egg/scorpion pair is unique to Luke. A white scorpion with its tail curled could superficially resemble an egg. The escalation from snake (dangerous) to scorpion (deadly) heightens the absurdity — no parent would do this. The logic builds toward the climactic argument in verse 13.
13. Luke's version culminates with the Holy Spirit (*pneuma hagion*) where Matthew 7:11 has 'good things' (*agatha*). This is theologically significant: for Luke, the Holy Spirit is the supreme gift, the ultimate 'good thing' that encompasses all others. The acknowledgment of human evil (*ponēroi hyparchontes*, 'being evil by nature') is not rhetorical — it establishes the lesser-to-greater argument: even flawed humans give well; a perfect Father gives incomparably better. The phrase *ho patēr ho ex ouranou* ('the Father from heaven') is Luke's distinctive formulation.
14. The adjective *kōphon* ('mute, deaf') is applied to the demon rather than the man, suggesting the demon was the cause of the muteness. The immediate restoration of speech upon the demon's departure confirms this causation. The crowds' amazement (*ethaumasān*) is a typical response to Jesus's exorcisms, setting the stage for the divided reactions that follow.
15. Beelzebul (Beelzeboul) is derived from the name Baal-zebul ('lord of the flies') in 2 Kings 1:2, though the *-zebul* form may mean 'lord of the dwelling' or 'lord of the exalted place.' The accusation that Jesus works by the authority of Satan's chief officer is the most extreme charge his opponents could level — it acknowledges his power while attributing it to the worst possible source.
15. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 2 Kings 1:2 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
16. The demand for a 'sign from heaven' (*sēmeion ex ouranou*) implies that an exorcism is not sufficient proof — they want a cosmic, undeniable display of divine power. The verb *peirazontes* ('testing') echoes the temptation narrative (4:2) and v. 25's description of the lawyer. Jesus will address this demand in vv. 29-32 with the sign of Jonah.
17. Jesus's knowledge of their thoughts (*eidōs autōn ta dianōēmata*) again demonstrates supernatural perception. The argument is logical: a kingdom at war with itself will collapse. The word *erēmoutai* ('is made desolate, is laid waste') echoes the prophetic language of national destruction. The 'house against house' (*oikos epi oikon*) may refer to families or to internal factions within a household.
18. The phrase 'his kingdom' (*hē basileia autou*) applies kingdom language to Satan — he has a counter-kingdom that opposes God's reign. Jesus accepts the premise that there is an organized demonic realm but argues that the Beelzebul hypothesis is internally incoherent: Satan would not authorize the destruction of his own forces.

19. The 'sons' (huiōi) refers to Jewish exorcists who were contemporaries of Jesus — exorcism was practiced within Judaism (cf. Acts 19:13-14, Josephus Antiquities 8.2.5). The argument is: if exorcism proves Satanic alliance, then your own exorcists stand condemned by the same logic. If their exorcisms are legitimate, then exorcism itself cannot be evidence of demonic power.
20. Luke preserves the phrase 'finger of God' (daktylō theou) where Matthew 12:28 has 'Spirit of God.' The 'finger of God' alludes directly to Exodus 8:19, where Pharaoh's magicians conceded that Moses' plagues were 'the finger of God' — a power they could not replicate. Jesus frames his exorcisms as a new exodus: God's finger is again at work, liberating people from bondage. The aorist ephthasen ('has come upon, has arrived') is decisive — the kingdom is not merely approaching but has already arrived.
20. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 8:19 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
21. The 'strong man' (ho ischyros) represents Satan. The phrase kathōplismenos ('fully armed, having armed himself completely') emphasizes thorough military preparedness. His 'courtyard' (aulēn) is his domain of control — the lives and territories under demonic oppression. The false 'peace' (eirēnē) of his possessions means the captives are secure only in the sense of being securely imprisoned.
22. The 'stronger one' (ischyroteros) is Jesus himself. The word panoplion ('full armor, complete suit of armor') includes every defensive weapon — the stronger one does not merely defeat the strong man but strips him completely bare. The verb diadidōsin ('distributes') implies the liberation of captives and the redistribution of what was stolen. Luke's version is more detailed than Mark's, emphasizing the totality of the victory.
23. This saying appears to contradict 9:50 ('whoever is not against you is for you'), but the contexts differ. Here the issue is personal allegiance to Jesus in the cosmic battle against evil — neutrality is impossible. In 9:50, the issue was tolerance toward others who work in Jesus's name. The gathering/scattering language (synagōn/skorpizei) uses shepherd imagery: Jesus gathers the flock, and anyone working at cross-purposes scatters it.
24. The 'waterless places' (anhydrōn topōn) reflect the Jewish belief that demons inhabited deserts and desolate regions (cf. Isaiah 13:21, 34:14; Baruch 4:35). The spirit's reference to the person as 'my house' (ton oikon mou) reveals a possessive claim — the demon considers the human being its property. The seeking of 'rest' (anapausin) parallels the wandering of unhoused spirits in Jewish demonology.
24. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 13:21. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
25. The perfect participles sesarōmenon ('swept clean') and kekosmēmenon ('put in order, decorated') describe a house that has been cleaned but not occupied. The critical point is what is absent: there is no new tenant, no positive spiritual presence filling the space. Exorcism without replacement — removal of evil without the filling of good — creates a dangerous spiritual vacuum.
26. Seven represents completeness — the reinfestation is total. The comparative ponērotera ('more evil') indicates escalation: the returned spirits are worse than the original. The verb katoikei ('settle, take up permanent residence') is stronger than temporary inhabitation — they intend to stay. The warning applies both to individuals and, by extension, to Israel: deliverance (exodus, exile's end) without genuine commitment to God leads to a worse condition than before.
27. This exchange is unique to Luke. The woman's praise honors Jesus indirectly by blessing his mother — a common Near Eastern form of expressing admiration for a person by praising the mother who raised him. The language is earthy and physical: koilia ('womb, belly') and mastoi ('breasts'). Jesus will redirect this biological blessing to a spiritual one.
28. The particle menoun ('indeed, rather, on the contrary') does not necessarily negate the woman's blessing but redirects and surpasses it. The true blessing is not biological connection to Jesus but hearing and obeying God's word. The participles akouontes ('hearing') and phylassontes ('keeping, guarding, obeying') describe ongoing habitual action. This saying echoes Luke 8:21: 'My mother and brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.'
29. The verb epathroisomenōn ('were gathering in addition, crowding together') indicates swelling numbers. Jesus addresses the sign-seekers from v. 16. The phrase genea ponēra ('evil generation') echoes Deuteronomy 1:35 and frames the present generation as comparable to the rebellious wilderness generation. The 'sign of Jonah' is explained differently in Matthew (three days in the belly of the fish = three days in the tomb); Luke's explanation in v. 30 focuses on Jonah himself as the sign.
29. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 1:35. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
30. Luke's version does not specify how Jonah was a sign — whether through his preaching of judgment, his survival from the fish, or his person itself. The parallel simply states that as Jonah functioned as a sign to Ninevites, so Jesus functions as a sign to this generation. The Ninevites responded to Jonah with repentance (Jonah 3:5-10); the implication is that this generation is failing to respond to one far greater.
30. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Jonah 3:5-10 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
31. The 'queen of the South' is the Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1-13), who traveled from southern Arabia to hear Solomon. The neuter pleion ('something greater'), not the masculine pleiōn ('someone greater'), is significant — Jesus may be referring to the kingdom of God rather than merely claiming personal superiority to Solomon. A pagan queen's pursuit of wisdom will stand as evidence against a generation that has God's wisdom in its midst and ignores it.
31. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Kings 10:1-13. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.

32. Luke reverses Matthew's order, placing the Ninevites second for emphasis — they connect back to the sign of Jonah discussion. The verb *metanoēsan* ('repented, changed their minds') describes the complete turnaround of a pagan city. The repeated formula 'something greater than X is here' (pleion + genitive + *hōde*) establishes a pattern: if outsiders responded to lesser revelations, this generation has no excuse for rejecting the greater.
33. This lamp saying reappears in a different context (cf. 8:16). Here, following the sign-seeking discussion, the point is that Jesus's message is not hidden or cryptic — it is publicly displayed like a lamp on a stand. The problem is not insufficient evidence but refusal to see. The word *kryptēn* ('hidden place, cellar') is unique to Luke's version.
34. The adjective *haplous* ('single, healthy, generous') is contrasted with *ponēros* ('bad, evil, sick'). In the ancient world, the eye was understood as the organ that admits light into the body (like a window, not a camera). A 'single' or 'good' eye admits light; an 'evil' or 'diseased' eye blocks it. The metaphor also carries moral overtones — a 'good eye' in Jewish idiom meant generosity, while an 'evil eye' meant stinginess or envy.
35. The warning is paradoxical: what you think is light may actually be darkness. The verb *skopei* ('watch carefully, take heed') implies active vigilance. The danger is not simply lacking light but having a distorted perception that mistakes darkness for light — a more insidious condition because the person is unaware of their blindness.
36. The verse describes total illumination — no dark corners, no hidden areas. The comparison to a lamp's *astrapē* ('flash, radiance, lightning') suggests intense, penetrating brightness. The point is holistic spiritual perception: when the inner eye is healthy, the entire person is illuminated and can perceive God's truth clearly.
37. The verb *aristēsē* refers to the morning or midday meal, not dinner. Jesus accepts invitations from Pharisees on multiple occasions in Luke (7:36, 14:1), demonstrating willingness to engage with his critics. The verb *anepesen* ('reclined') describes the typical posture at a formal meal — reclining on one's left side on a couch.
38. The verb *ebaptisthē* (literally 'was baptized, was immersed') refers to the ritual hand-washing practiced by Pharisees before meals. This was not a matter of hygiene but of ritual purity — removing ceremonial contamination acquired through contact with common people or objects. The practice was a Pharisaic tradition, not a Torah commandment, which is precisely Jesus's point in what follows.
39. The cup and dish metaphor is brilliantly chosen at a dinner table. The word *harpagēs* ('greed, robbery, plunder') suggests that the contents of the Pharisees' clean cups were obtained through exploitation. The contrast between *exōthen* ('outside') and *esōthen* ('inside') establishes the external-versus-internal theme that drives all six woes.
40. The address *aphrones* ('fools, senseless ones') is sharp and direct. The theological argument is that God who created the exterior also created the interior — therefore both require purification. To clean only the outside is to ignore the Creator's concern with the whole person. The question expects the answer 'yes' — of course God made both.
41. This enigmatic verse has been interpreted variously. The phrase *ta enonta* ('the things within, the contents') likely refers to the contents of their cups and dishes — give away what you have as alms rather than hoarding it. When the inside (the heart's disposition toward generosity) is cleansed through charitable giving, the external purity rituals become genuinely meaningful rather than empty performance.
42. The first woe targets misplaced priorities. Tithing garden herbs (*hēdyosmon*, 'mint'; *pēganon*, 'rue') was an extreme extension of the tithing law — the Torah required tithes of grain, wine, and oil (Deuteronomy 14:22-23), but the Pharisees extended it to small garden herbs. Jesus does not condemn tithing itself (*tauta edei poiēsai*, 'these you should have done') but the neglect of weightier matters: justice (*krisin*) and the love of God (*tēn agapēn tou theou*). Luke's version uniquely includes 'the love of God' where Matthew has 'mercy and faithfulness.'
42. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Deuteronomy 14:22-23. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
43. The second woe targets the desire for public honor. The *prōtokathedrian* ('chief seat, front seat') in the synagogue was the bench facing the congregation, reserved for the most distinguished. The *aspasous* ('greetings') in the marketplace were elaborate public acknowledgments of status — being hailed with titles and deference. The verb *agapate* ('you love') ironically uses the same love-word that the previous verse said they neglect toward God.
44. The third woe compares the Pharisees to *adēla mnēmeia* ('unmarked, invisible graves'). Contact with a grave rendered a person ritually unclean for seven days (Numbers 19:16). The irony is devastating: the Pharisees who are obsessed with purity are themselves hidden sources of contamination. People who interact with them become spiritually defiled without knowing it. Matthew 23:27 uses the opposite image — whitewashed tombs that are visible but beautiful outside. Luke's version is sharper: these graves are invisible.
44. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Numbers 19:16. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
45. The *nomikos* ('legal expert') is distinct from the Pharisees — these were professional scholars of Torah law, whereas the Pharisees were a broader religious movement. The legal expert's complaint (*hybrizeis*, 'you insult, you treat shamefully') inadvertently invites Jesus to extend his critique to a second group, which he does in the next three woes.
46. The fourth woe (first against the lawyers) targets the imposition of religious obligations that the teachers themselves evade. The word *phortia* ('burdens, loads') refers to the accumulated legal rulings and interpretations that multiplied the Torah's requirements. The adjective *dysbastakta* ('hard to bear, oppressive') conveys crushing weight. The image of not touching with 'one finger' (*heni tōn daktylōn*) suggests they will not offer even minimal assistance in carrying the burdens they impose.

47. The fifth woe exposes an ironic complicity: building elaborate tombs for the prophets appears to honor them, but it actually serves as a monument to the violence of previous generations. The implied argument continues in the next verse — by building the tombs, they demonstrate solidarity with the killers, completing the cycle: the fathers killed, the sons build memorials, and both participate in the rejection of God's messengers.
48. The verb *syneudokeite* ('approve, consent to, share in the approval of') makes the charge explicit: tomb-building constitutes endorsement. The logic is sharp: the act of memorializing dead prophets while continuing to reject living ones reveals that the honor is for dead voices only. A dead prophet cannot challenge you; a living one can.
49. The phrase 'the wisdom of God said' (*hē sophia tou theou eipen*) is unique to Luke and its source is debated — it may be quoting a lost wisdom writing, or Jesus may be speaking as the Wisdom of God personified (cf. Proverbs 8), or Luke may be paraphrasing a saying that in Matthew 23:34 is spoken by Jesus directly ('I send you prophets'). The addition of 'apostles' (*apostolous*) alongside 'prophets' anticipates the early church's experience of persecution as described in Acts.
49. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Proverbs 8. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
50. The passive *ekzētēthē* ('may be required, may be sought out, may be charged') uses judicial language — God will hold this generation accountable for the accumulated guilt of prophet-killing throughout history. The phrase *apo katabolēs kosmou* ('from the foundation of the world') extends the scope to all of human history. The logic is that this generation, by rejecting the final prophet and his messengers, brings the full weight of all previous rejections to a climax.
51. Abel's murder (Genesis 4) is the first murder in Scripture; Zechariah's (2 Chronicles 24:20-21) is the last in the Hebrew canon, which ends with Chronicles. Thus 'from Abel to Zechariah' spans the entire Old Testament from first book to last. Zechariah was killed 'between the altar and the sanctuary' (*metaxy tou thysiassteriou kai tou oikou*) — murdered in the temple precinct itself, the ultimate desecration. The identification is with Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest.
51. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 4. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
51. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 2 Chronicles 24:20-21. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
52. The sixth and final woe is perhaps the most devastating. The 'key of knowledge' (*tēn kleida tēs gnōseōs*) refers to the proper understanding of Scripture that the legal experts were supposed to teach. Instead of unlocking the Scriptures for people, they have removed the key — their interpretations block rather than facilitate understanding. Matthew 23:13 has 'you shut the kingdom of heaven' — Luke's version focuses on knowledge as the gateway. The double failure (they neither enter nor allow others to enter) makes them obstacles to the very truth they claim to teach.
53. The verb *deinōs enechēin* ('to press hard, to be bitterly hostile') describes intense antagonism. The word *apostatōmatizein* ('to provoke to speak, to cross-examine, to draw out statements') is rare and means to force someone to speak on specific topics — essentially trying to catch Jesus making incriminating statements. The shift from dinner conversation to hostile interrogation is abrupt and threatening.
54. The verb *enedrevontes* ('lying in ambush, setting a trap') is a hunting term — they are stalking Jesus like prey. The goal *thēreusai* ('to catch, to trap, to hunt') continues the predatory imagery. The phrase *ek tou stomatos autou* ('from his mouth') specifies that they want words they can use against him. This verse sets the stage for the escalating conflict that will dominate the rest of Luke's narrative.

12

Summary: *Luke 12 is a sweeping discourse on anxiety, possessions, and readiness for judgment. Jesus warns against the leaven of the Pharisees (hypocrisy), assures the disciples that God values them more than sparrows, tells the parable of the rich fool who stores up wealth only to die that night, teaches about freedom from anxiety by pointing to ravens and lilies, urges readiness for the master's return through parables of watchful servants and a faithful steward, and warns that his coming brings not peace but division. The chapter closes with Jesus's frustration that the crowds can read weather signs but not the signs of the present time.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The parable of the rich fool (vv. 13-21) is unique to Luke and encapsulates his distinctive concern about wealth — the man's soliloquy with his own soul is one of the most psychologically revealing passages in the Gospels. The anxiety discourse (vv. 22-34) parallels Matthew's Sermon on the Mount material but is placed in a different context, following the rich fool parable, which gives the teaching a sharper economic edge. Luke alone includes the promise 'Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom' (v. 32) — one of the most tender sayings attributed to Jesus. The fire/baptism/division sayings (vv. 49-53) present a startlingly combative Jesus who expects his mission to fracture families.*

Translation Friction: The transition between the rich fool parable and the anxiety discourse creates tension: is material security wrong, or only anxiety about it? Jesus appears to condemn both storing up wealth (v. 21) and worrying about basic needs (vv. 22-31), which raises questions about the practical ethic being proposed. The 'fire on earth' and 'baptism' sayings (vv. 49-50) are cryptic and have been interpreted variously. The family division passage (vv. 51-53) draws on Micah 7:6 and challenges the common assumption that Jesus's message is primarily about peace and harmony.

Connections: The rich fool parable connects to the broader Lukan theme of wealth reversal (1:53, 6:20-26, 16:19-31, 18:18-30). The anxiety discourse parallels Matthew 6:25-34 but with distinctive Lukan additions. The faithful steward parable anticipates the parables of chapter 16. The fire and division sayings connect to John the Baptist's prophecy of fire-baptism (3:16). The weather signs passage echoes the prophetic tradition of discerning God's activity in current events.

1Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, he began to say to his disciples first, "Watch out for the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be made known. 3Therefore whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in inner rooms will be proclaimed from the housetops. 4I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body and after that can do nothing more. 5But I will show you whom to fear: fear the one who, after killing, has authority to cast into Gehenna. Yes, I tell you, fear him! 6Are not five sparrows sold for two assaria? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God. 7Indeed, even the hairs of your head are all counted. Do not be afraid — you are worth more than many sparrows. 8I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before people, the Son of Man will also acknowledge before the angels of God. 9But the one who denies me before people will be denied before the angels of God. 10Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. 11When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not worry about how or what you should say in your defense, or what you should speak. 12For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you must say." 13Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." 14But he said to him, "Friend, who appointed me as a judge or arbitrator over you?" 15Then he said to them, "Watch out! Guard yourselves against every kind of greed, because a person's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." 16He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a certain rich man produced abundantly. 17He reasoned to himself, 'What should I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' 18Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many good things stored up for many years. Relax, eat, drink, and celebrate.'" 20But God said to him, 'Fool! This very night your soul is demanded of you. And the things you have prepared — whose will they be?' 21So it is with the one who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." 22He said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. 23For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. 24Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have no storeroom or barn, yet God feeds them. How much more valuable are you than birds! 25And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life span? 26If then you cannot do even this small thing, why do you worry about the rest? 27Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these. 28If God so clothes the grass that is in the field today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith! 29So do not keep striving for what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not be anxious. 30For all the nations of the world pursue these things, and your Father knows that you need them. 31Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. 32Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. 33Sell your possessions and give to the needy. Make for yourselves purses that do not wear out — an inexhaustible treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 35"Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, 36Be like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, ready to open the door for him the moment he arrives and knocks. 37Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself for service, have them recline at the table, and come and serve them. 38If he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them ready — blessed

are those servants! ³⁹But know this: if the homeowner had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰You also must be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." ⁴¹Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for everyone?" ⁴²The Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise steward whom the master will put in charge of his household servants, to give them their food allowance at the proper time? ⁴³Blessed is that servant whom his master finds doing so when he comes. ⁴⁴Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁵But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is taking a long time in coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk, ⁴⁶That servant's master will come on a day he does not expect, at a time he does not know. The master will cut him off and assign him a place with the unfaithful. ⁴⁷That servant who knew his master's will but did not prepare or act according to his will shall receive a severe beating. ⁴⁸But the one who did not know, yet did things deserving punishment, will receive a light beating. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, even more will be demanded. ⁴⁹"I came to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed! ⁵¹Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! ⁵²For from now on, five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. ⁵³Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." ⁵⁴He also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, 'A rainstorm is coming,' and so it happens. ⁵⁵And when the south wind blows, you say, 'It will be scorching hot,' and it happens. ⁵⁶Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time? ⁵⁷"And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? ⁵⁸For as you are going with your adversary to the magistrate, make an effort to settle with him on the way, or he may drag you before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. ⁵⁹I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the very last penny."

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The word *myriadōn* ('myriads, tens of thousands') indicates an enormous crowd — Luke hyperbolically suggests tens of thousands. The crushing press (*katapatein allēlous*, 'trampling one another') creates a vivid physical scene. Despite the public setting, Jesus addresses the disciples 'first' (*prōton*), indicating priority of instruction. He defines the Pharisees' leaven specifically as hypocrisy (*hypokrisis*) — the disconnect between external appearance and internal reality, the theme of chapter 11's woes.
2. The perfect participle *synkekalymmenon* ('covered up, concealed') paired with the future passive *apokalyphthēsetai* ('will be uncovered, revealed') establishes an eschatological certainty: what hypocrisy hides, God's judgment will expose. The passive voice implies God as the agent of revelation.
3. The contrast between private speech (in darkness, whispered in inner rooms) and public exposure (in the light, proclaimed from rooftops) warns that hidden conversations will become public knowledge. The *tameiois* ('inner rooms, storerooms') were the most private spaces in a house. Housetops (*dōmatōn*) were flat roofs used as public gathering and proclamation spaces in the ancient Near East.
4. The address 'my friends' (*tois philois mou*) is uniquely Lukan and remarkably intimate — Jesus identifies the disciples as friends, not merely followers or students. The prohibition against fear of those who can only kill the body relativizes even death: physical destruction is the absolute limit of human power, and 'after that' (*meta tauta*) they are impotent.
5. The word *geennan* ('Gehenna') refers to the Valley of Hinnom (Hebrew *ge-hinnom*) south of Jerusalem, associated with child sacrifice to Molech (2 Kings 23:10) and later used as the city's burning garbage dump. It became a metaphor for divine judgment and destruction. The identity of 'the one' to fear is debated: most interpreters understand it as God, who alone has authority (*exousian*) beyond death. The emphatic repetition 'yes, I tell you, fear him' (*nai legō hymin, touton phobēthēte*) underscores the seriousness.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 2 Kings 23:10 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
6. Luke has five sparrows for two assaria where Matthew (10:29) has two for one assarion — Luke's version implies a bulk discount (buy four, get one free), emphasizing even greater cheapness. An assarion was worth roughly one-sixteenth of a denarius, about ten minutes of a laborer's wage. The point is not that sparrows are valuable but that even the most commercially worthless creatures are individually known to God.
7. The perfect passive *ērithmēntai* ('have been counted and remain counted') indicates God's thorough, ongoing knowledge. The average human head has about 100,000 hairs — God's attention to detail is incomprehensibly minute. The argument moves from lesser to greater: if God does not forget sparrows, and if God counts your hairs, then your life is absolutely secure in his attention.
8. The verb *homologēsē* ('confess, acknowledge, declare openly') means to make a public declaration of allegiance. The phrase 'before the angels of God' (*emprosthen tōn angelōn tou theou*) envisions a heavenly courtroom scene where Jesus serves as advocate. The reciprocity is exact: public confession leads to heavenly acknowledgment.

9. The passive *aparnēthēsetai* ('will be denied') implies that God or the Son of Man is the agent of denial. The shift from active (the human denies) to passive (the person is denied) creates distance — the judgment is not vindictive but a natural consequence of the choice. Peter's threefold denial (Luke 22:54-62) will test this saying dramatically.
10. This is Luke's version of the 'unforgivable sin' saying. The distinction between speaking against the Son of Man (forgivable) and blaspheming the Holy Spirit (unforgivable) is difficult. One interpretation: rejecting the earthly Jesus out of ignorance or confusion is forgivable (as with Paul, who persecuted the church before his conversion), but willfully attributing the Holy Spirit's work to evil (the Beelzebul charge of 11:15) represents a hardened condition that places oneself beyond the reach of repentance.
11. Three venues of persecution are named: synagogues (Jewish religious courts), rulers (archas, civil authorities), and authorities (exousias, governing powers). The verb *merimnēsēte* ('do not worry, do not be anxious') is the same word Jesus will use in the anxiety discourse later in this chapter (v. 22). The threefold 'how or what... or what' (*pōs ē ti apologēsēsthe ē ti eipēte*) covers both strategy and content of their defense.
12. The promise that the Holy Spirit will provide words *en autē tē hōra* ('in that very hour') excludes advance preparation in favor of in-the-moment divine guidance. The verb *didaxei* ('will teach') makes the Spirit the true instructor. This promise is fulfilled repeatedly in Acts (4:8, 6:10, 7:55). The word *dei* ('must, it is necessary') implies divinely scripted testimony.
13. This interruption from the crowd shifts the discourse from persecution to possessions. Rabbis were commonly asked to mediate disputes, including inheritance matters. Under Jewish law, the eldest son received a double portion (Deuteronomy 21:17), and disputes over the remainder were common. The man wants Jesus to serve as an authoritative arbitrator.
13. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Deuteronomy 21:17 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
14. The address *anthrōpe* ('man, sir, friend') is blunt but not hostile. Jesus's refusal to arbitrate echoes Moses' questioner in Exodus 2:14: 'Who made you a ruler and judge over us?' Jesus declines the role of legal mediator, not because the question is unimportant, but because it addresses the symptom (unfair division) rather than the disease (greed), which he will address in the next verse.
14. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 2:14: See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
15. The double imperative *horate kai phylassesthe* ('watch out and guard yourselves') conveys urgency. The word *pleonexias* ('greed, covetousness, desire for more') literally means 'the desire to have more.' The qualifier *pasēs* ('every kind of') broadens the warning beyond obvious avarice to include all forms of acquisitiveness. The principle that follows — life is not defined by possessions — directly contradicts the prevailing cultural assumption that wealth equals life, security, and value.
16. The parable is unique to Luke. The man is already rich (*plousiou*) before the bumper crop — the harvest creates surplus, not need. The verb *euphorēsēn* ('produced well, bore good fruit') applies to the land, not the farmer: the productivity is a gift from the soil, not the man's achievement. This detail subtly undermines the man's later claim of ownership over what the land produced.
17. The internal monologue (*diologizeto en heautō*, 'reasoned within himself') reveals a man with no community — he consults no one, considers no one's needs, speaks only to himself. The possessive 'my crops' (*tous karpous mou*) begins a pattern of self-referential language that intensifies through the parable. His problem — too much abundance — is ironically a 'good' problem that reveals the poverty of his imagination.
18. The decisive 'this is what I will do' (*touto poiēsō*) shows a man who has resolved his dilemma entirely by himself. The solution — bigger barns — addresses only the storage problem. No thought is given to distribution, charity, or the community. The repeated possessives (*mou*, 'my') continue: my barns, my grain, my goods. The verb *kathelō* ('tear down, demolish') implies destruction of what was adequate in order to build something excessive.
19. The self-address to his own soul (*tē psychē mou*) is the climax of his isolation — his only conversation partner is himself. The four imperatives (*anapauou, phage, pie, euphraiou*: 'relax, eat, drink, celebrate') echo the philosophy of Ecclesiastes 8:15 and anticipate Paul's quotation of the Epicurean maxim in 1 Corinthians 15:32. The man assumes his future is secured by accumulated goods. The phrase 'many years' (*etē polla*) is about to be dramatically shortened.
19. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Ecclesiastes 8:15. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
20. God's direct speech is rare in Jesus's parables, making this intervention especially dramatic. The address *aphrōn* ('fool, senseless one') echoes Psalm 14:1: 'The fool says in his heart, there is no God.' The verb *apaitousin* ('they demand, they require back') uses the third person plural impersonally — 'they' may refer to angels of death or simply be a way of saying 'your life is being demanded.' The devastating question 'whose will they be?' (*tini estai*) exposes the futility of accumulation without God.
20. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Psalm 14:1: — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
21. The application distinguishes between storing up for oneself (*thēsaurizōn heautō*) and being 'rich toward God' (*eis theon ploutōn*). The phrase 'rich toward God' is unique and provocative — it suggests that true wealth is measured by one's relationship with God and generosity, not by accumulated possessions. The contrast implies that the two orientations are mutually exclusive: self-directed hoarding prevents God-directed richness.
22. The connecting phrase *dia touto* ('therefore, for this reason') links the anxiety teaching directly to the rich fool parable — because hoarding for oneself is foolish, worrying about material needs is equally misguided but from the opposite direction. The verb *merimnate* ('do not worry, do not be anxious') prohibits the kind of fretting that dominates one's thinking, not responsible planning. The two concerns (food for life, clothing for body)

cover the basic necessities.

- 23.** The argument is from greater to lesser: if God gave you the greater gift (life, a body), he will surely provide the lesser gift (food, clothing) that sustains it. The word *psychē* here means 'life' in the biological sense, not 'soul' in the metaphysical sense.
- 24.** Luke specifies ravens (*korakas*) where Matthew has 'birds of the air.' Ravens were unclean animals under Jewish law (Leviticus 11:15), making the choice pointed: God provides even for unclean scavengers. The mention of 'storeroom or barn' (*tameion oude apothēkē*) directly echoes the rich fool's barns — the ravens have none and yet are fed. The argument from lesser to greater (if God feeds ravens, how much more you) invites trust.
- 24.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Leviticus 11:15. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 25.** The word *hēlikian* can mean either 'stature' (height) or 'lifespan' (age). A cubit (*pēchyn*, roughly 18 inches) is absurd as an addition to height but makes more sense as a metaphor for a small unit of time added to one's life. Most modern interpreters prefer 'lifespan' — worrying cannot extend your life even slightly. The rhetorical question expects the answer 'no one.'
- 26.** The word *elachiston* ('smallest, least, most trivial') frames extending one's life even slightly as the smallest imaginable accomplishment — and even that is beyond human power. The logical conclusion: if you cannot control the smallest thing, anxiety about larger matters is futile. This verse is unique to Luke.
- 27.** The verb *katanoēsate* ('consider carefully, look closely at') invites sustained observation, not a glance. The lilies (*krina*) are likely wildflowers rather than cultivated lilies — common field flowers that require no human effort. The comparison with Solomon at the height of his royal splendor is hyperbolic and memorable: the most lavishly dressed king in Israel's history cannot match what grows wild in a field.
- 28.** The dried grass and wildflowers were commonly used as fuel for bread ovens (*klibanon*) in Palestine. The contrast between their ephemeral existence (today alive, tomorrow fuel) and God's care for them makes the argument from lesser to greater even more powerful. The gentle rebuke *oligopistoi* ('you of little faith, you with small trust') appears four times in Matthew but only here in Luke. It implies that anxiety is a faith problem, not a planning problem.
- 29.** The rare verb *meteōrizesthe* ('do not be anxious, do not be in suspense, do not be tossed about') literally means 'to be raised up in the air' or 'to be suspended' — like a ship tossed on waves or a mind that cannot find solid ground. The image is of a person whose mind is constantly agitated, lifted and dropped by worry. This verb appears only here in the New Testament.
- 30.** The phrase *ta ethnē tou kosmou* ('the nations of the world') refers to those who do not know God — their relentless pursuit of material security is understandable because they have no Father who provides. The disciples' situation is different: 'your Father knows' (*hymōn ho patēr oiden*) eliminates the need for anxious pursuit. Knowledge precedes provision — God knows before you ask.
- 31.** Luke's shorter form — 'his kingdom' (*tēn basileian autou*) rather than Matthew's 'the kingdom of God and his righteousness' — focuses the command with singular clarity. The verb *prostethēsetai* ('will be added') implies that material provision comes as a byproduct of kingdom-seeking, not as a separate pursuit. The passive voice indicates God as the provider.
- 32.** This verse, unique to Luke, is one of the most tender and reassuring sayings of Jesus. The diminutive 'little flock' (*to mikron poimnion*) acknowledges the disciples' smallness and vulnerability while the shepherd imagery implies Jesus's protective care. The verb *eudokēsen* ('has been pleased, has graciously decided') indicates that the kingdom is not earned by the flock's efforts but freely given by the Father's delight. The aorist tense suggests this decision has already been made.
- 33.** The command to sell possessions (*pōlēstate ta hyparchonta hymōn*) is radical and specific to Luke's version. The metaphor shifts from earthly to heavenly economics: earthly purses (*ballantia*) wear out, but heavenly ones (*mē palaioumena*, 'not growing old') endure. The word *anekleipton* ('unfailing, inexhaustible') describes a treasure that cannot be depleted. The threats of thief and moth represent loss through theft and slow decay — neither can touch heavenly investment.
- 34.** This principle works in both directions: the heart follows the treasure, and where you invest reveals where your heart already is. The future tense *estai* ('will be') suggests that current investment decisions determine future heart orientation. This applies the rich fool's lesson positively: rather than storing up for yourself, invest in heaven and your heart will follow.
- 35.** The image of girded loins (*hai osphyes periezōsmenai*) refers to tucking long robes into a belt for physical activity — the posture of a servant ready to work (cf. Exodus 12:11, Israel's posture at the first Passover). Combined with burning lamps, the image is of a household on alert, expecting the master's return at any moment.
- 35.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 12:11 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 36.** The wedding feast (*gamōn*) could last days, making the master's return time genuinely uncertain. The verb *analsē* ('return, depart from') literally means 'to loose' or 'to break up' — to leave the feast. The emphasis on 'at once' (*eutheōs*) stresses instant readiness: no delay between knock and response. The parable envisions servants whose sole purpose is attentive waiting.
- 37.** This verse contains one of the most astonishing reversals in Jesus's teaching. The master who returns does not sit down and demand service — he girds himself (*perizōsetai*, the servant's posture from v. 35) and serves his servants. This is a radical inversion of the master-servant relationship. The image anticipates Jesus washing the disciples' feet (John 13) and his self-description as 'one who serves' (Luke 22:27). The verb *diakonēsei* ('will serve, will minister') is the root of 'deacon.'

38. Luke uses the Jewish two-watch night system (second watch = roughly 10 PM to 2 AM; third watch = 2 AM to 6 AM) rather than the Roman four-watch system. The later the hour, the harder it is to stay awake, which increases the merit of readiness. The repeated 'blessed' (makarioi) reinforces that watchfulness itself is rewarded.
39. The metaphor shifts from master/servant to homeowner/thief. The word diorychthenai ('to be dug through') reflects first-century construction — mud-brick walls could be literally dug through by a burglar. The thief image for the Lord's return is deliberately jarring: Jesus comes like a thief only in the sense of unexpected timing, not in intent. The point is that unpredictability demands constant readiness.
40. The application identifies 'the master' and 'the thief' with the Son of Man — Jesus's preferred self-designation. The phrase hē hōra ou dokeite ('the hour you do not expect') makes the timing inherently unpredictable. Any attempt to calculate the moment is already a misunderstanding of the teaching: the point is perpetual readiness, not chronological calculation.
41. Peter's question is pragmatic: does this teaching about watchfulness apply only to the disciples (leaders) or to all followers? Jesus's answer (vv. 42-48) addresses both: it begins with the faithful steward (leadership responsibility) and ends with graduated accountability for all. Notably, Jesus never directly answers Peter's question — he tells another parable instead.
42. The word oikonomos ('steward, household manager') is the source of 'economy' — a steward managed the master's entire household. The sitometrion ('food ration, grain allowance') was the measured portion given to household servants at regular intervals. The steward's job is not to consume the master's resources but to distribute them faithfully. This parable addresses Peter's question by focusing on leadership responsibility.
43. The beatitude (makarios) rewards faithful action, not mere waiting. The participle poiounta ('doing') emphasizes ongoing activity — the blessed servant is found in the act of faithful service, not merely expecting the master's return.
44. The reward for faithful management of part is management of the whole. The promotion from household steward to manager of 'all possessions' (pasin tois hyparchousin autou) represents total trust. This principle of graduated authority — faithful in small things leads to responsibility for great things — runs throughout Jesus's parables (cf. 16:10, 19:17).
45. The internal reasoning ('says in his heart') mirrors the rich fool's self-dialogue. The servant's abuse of power takes two forms: violence against those under him (beating servants) and self-indulgence (eating, drinking, getting drunk). The perceived delay (chronizei, 'is taking a long time') becomes the excuse for both cruelty and excess. This is a warning to church leaders who exploit their position when accountability seems distant.
46. The verb dichotomēsei ('will cut in two, will cut to pieces') is shockingly violent — it may be literal (execution by bisection was practiced in the ancient world) or metaphorical for severe punishment. The phrase 'with the unfaithful' (meta tōn apistōn) — Luke's reading versus Matthew's 'hypocrites' — places the abusive steward among those who have no faith at all, the ultimate demotion from trusted insider to rejected outsider.
47. This verse begins a section unique to Luke that establishes the principle of graduated accountability. Knowledge increases responsibility: the servant who knew (gnous) the master's will and still disobeyed receives 'many blows' (darēsetai pollas, with plēgas implied). The double failure — neither preparing (hetoimasas) nor doing (poiēsas) — covers both intention and action.
48. The principle of graduated accountability is stated twice: first negatively (more knowledge = more punishment for failure) and then positively in the famous maxim 'from everyone who has been given much, much will be required' (panti hō edothē poly, poly zētēthēsetai). The passive voices ('has been given,' 'has been entrusted') point to God as the giver. The progression from 'required' (zētēthēsetai) to 'demanded' (aitēsousin) intensifies the expectation.
49. This enigmatic saying is unique to Luke. The 'fire' (pyr) likely represents judgment, purification, or the crisis that Jesus's mission brings (cf. John the Baptist's prediction of fire-baptism, Luke 3:16). The phrase ti thelō ei ēdē anēphthē is debated — it could mean 'how I wish it were already burning!' (expressing eager anticipation) or 'what do I want, since it has already been kindled?' (acknowledging the process has begun). The former reading fits better with v. 50's longing.
50. The 'baptism' (baptisma) is a metaphor for his coming suffering and death — immersion in affliction (cf. Mark 10:38). The verb synechomai ('I am constrained, pressed, distressed') conveys intense inner pressure. The word telesthē ('be completed, be accomplished') echoes the cry from the cross: tetelestai ('it is finished,' John 19:30). Jesus experiences his approaching death not with resignation but with urgent tension — a desire for the crisis to come and be resolved.
51. Luke has 'division' (diamerismon) where Matthew 10:34 has 'a sword.' The word diamerismon ('division, separation, dissension') is more precise — the result of Jesus's coming is the splitting of communities and families along the fault line of faith. This saying appears to contradict the angels' announcement of 'peace on earth' (2:14), but the point is that the peace Jesus ultimately brings first creates a crisis of decision that divides.
52. The specific number five — an oddly precise detail — represents a typical household (parents, adult children, perhaps a grandparent or in-law). The uneven split (three versus two) means no neat halving — the division cuts irregularly through families, creating minority and majority factions within the same home.
53. The family relationships listed echo Micah 7:6, a prophetic text describing the breakdown of social order in the last days. Jesus applies this eschatological language to the present: the kingdom's arrival through his ministry is already creating the divisions that the prophets associated with the end times. The threefold pattern (father/son, mother/daughter, mother-in-law/daughter-in-law) covers three generations and both genders.
53. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Micah 7:6 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.

54. The weather signs are geographically specific to Palestine: clouds from the west (from the Mediterranean Sea) bring rain. Jesus uses familiar meteorological knowledge to expose a deeper failure of perception. The adverb *eutheōs* ('immediately') emphasizes how quickly people can read weather signs — the contrast with their inability to read 'the present time' (v. 56) is the point.
55. The south wind (*noton*) blew from the Negev desert and brought extreme heat (*kausōn*, 'burning heat, scorching wind'). These two weather patterns (western cloud = rain, southern wind = heat) were universally known in Palestine. The repeated *kai ginetai* ('and it happens') confirms their reliability as signs.
56. The address 'hypocrites' (*hypokritai*) returns to the chapter's opening theme (v. 1). The word *kairon* ('time, opportune moment, season') is distinct from *chronos* (mere chronological time) — *kairos* refers to a decisive moment pregnant with significance. Jesus's ministry is the *kairos*: the kingdom is arriving, judgment is approaching, and the crowds are as oblivious as a farmer who cannot read clouds. The verb *dokimazein* ('to test, to interpret, to discern') means to evaluate evidence and draw conclusions.
57. The phrase *aph' heautōn* ('from yourselves, on your own') implies that moral discernment should not require external prophetic signs — they have the capacity to judge what is right (to *dikaion*) if they would use it. This is a call to moral common sense, not just theological insight.
58. The parable functions as both practical legal advice and eschatological warning. The *antidikos* ('adversary, opponent in a lawsuit') represents those with claims against you. The phrase *dos ergasian* ('make an effort, do your best') urges proactive reconciliation before the matter reaches court. On the theological level: settle accounts before the final judgment, while there is still time. The chain of consequences (adversary magistrate judge officer prison) shows escalating severity that could have been avoided by early action.
59. The *lepton* ('penny, mite') was the smallest coin in circulation — worth about one-128th of a denarius. The double negative *ou mē* ('absolutely not, never') makes the sentence emphatic: escape is impossible until every fraction of the debt is paid. The warning reinforces the urgency of v. 58: settle now, because the consequences of inaction are total and inescapable.

13

Summary: *Luke 13 opens with Jesus challenging the assumption that suffering indicates special sinfulness, using two contemporary tragedies — Pilate's massacre of Galilean worshipers and the collapse of the tower of Siloam — to call the entire nation to repentance. The parable of the barren fig tree extends the warning: Israel has been given one more season of grace. Jesus then heals a crippled woman on the Sabbath, provoking a confrontation with a synagogue ruler. The chapter continues with the parables of the mustard seed and leaven, followed by the sobering teaching about the narrow door. The chapter concludes with Jesus's defiance of Herod's threats and his lament over Jerusalem.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke 13 is uniquely Lukan in its opening section (vv. 1-9), which addresses theodicy — the question of why people suffer — with an answer that refuses the simplistic equation of suffering with personal sin. The healing of the bent-over woman (vv. 10-17) is unique to Luke and presents a woman who has been bound by Satan for eighteen years, framing illness as spiritual bondage and healing as liberation — a thoroughly Lukan emphasis. The lament over Jerusalem (vv. 34-35) is one of the most emotionally charged passages in the Gospels, revealing Jesus's grief over the city that kills its prophets.*

Translation Friction: *The historical incidents in vv. 1-5 (Pilate's massacre, the Siloam tower collapse) are not recorded outside Luke's Gospel but fit the known character of Pilate's brutal governance. The fig tree parable (vv. 6-9) raises questions about Israel's final chance — is the 'one more year' an offer of hope or a final warning? The narrow door saying (vv. 24-30) contains some of the most exclusive language in the Gospels, including 'I do not know where you come from' — a statement of relationship denial from the master, not merely ignorance.*

Connections: *The fig tree parable connects to Isaiah 5:1-7 (the Song of the Vineyard) and Micah 7:1. The Sabbath healing connects to Luke's pattern of Sabbath controversies (6:1-11, 14:1-6). The mustard seed and leaven parables parallel Matthew 13 and Mark 4. The narrow door teaching echoes Matthew 7:13-14 but with distinctive elements. The Jerusalem lament appears in Matthew 23:37-39 in a different narrative context. The Herod warning (vv. 31-33) is unique to Luke and continues the Herod thread from 9:7-9.*

1At that very time some people came and reported to him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. 2He answered them, "Do you think these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered these things? 3No, I tell you! But unless you repent, you will all perish in the same way. 4Or those eighteen on whom

the tower in Siloam fell and killed them — do you think they were worse offenders than all the other people living in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you! But unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did." ⁶Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷He said to the gardener, 'Look, for three years now I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree and have found none. Cut it down! Why should it waste the soil?' ⁸But the gardener answered, 'Sir, leave it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put on fertilizer. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, fine. But if not, you can cut it down.'" ¹⁰He was teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath day. ¹¹A woman was there who had been disabled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. ¹²When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability." ¹³Then he laid his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and began glorifying God. ¹⁴But the synagogue ruler, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, responded by saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work should be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." ¹⁵The Lord answered him, "Hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? ¹⁶Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, be released from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" ¹⁷When he said these things, all his opponents were put to shame, and the entire crowd rejoiced at all the glorious things being done by him. ¹⁸He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like, and what shall I compare it to? ¹⁹It is like a mustard seed that a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the sky made nests in its branches." ²⁰Again he said, "What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? ²¹It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour until the whole batch was leavened." ²²He went through town after town and village after village, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. ²³Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few being saved?" He said to them, ²⁴"Strive to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able. ²⁵Once the master of the house gets up and shuts the door, you will stand outside knocking and saying, 'Lord, open to us!' But he will answer you, 'I do not know where you come from.' ²⁶Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.' ²⁷But he will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of unrighteousness!' ²⁸There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. ²⁹People will come from east and west, from north and south, and recline at the table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰And indeed, some who are last will be first, and some who are first will be last." ³¹At that same hour, some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get out and leave here, because Herod wants to kill you." ³²He said to them, "Go tell that fox, 'Look, I am casting out demons and performing healings today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.' ³³But I must keep going today, tomorrow, and the next day, because it is impossible for a prophet to perish outside Jerusalem. ³⁴"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you — how often I have wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁵Look, your house is abandoned. I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. This incident is unattested outside Luke but is consistent with Pilate's character as described by Josephus and Philo — he was notorious for violent suppression of perceived threats. The mixing of victims' blood 'with their sacrifices' (*meta tōn thysiōn autōn*) means Pilate's soldiers killed them in the act of offering temple sacrifices, a supreme desecration. The reporters likely expected Jesus to comment on the victims' sinfulness as an explanation for their fate.
2. Jesus directly challenges the assumption that suffering is proportional to sin (the retributive theology that Job's friends advocated). The comparative *hamartōloi para pantas* ('sinners beyond all') implies the question 'were they especially sinful?' Jesus's answer in the next verse is an emphatic no — but with a surprising turn.
3. Jesus refuses the theodicy question ('why did they suffer?') and redirects to repentance. The word *homoiōs* ('in the same way, likewise') is striking — it may mean 'similarly' (by violent, sudden death) rather than 'for the same reason.' Given that Jerusalem would be destroyed by Rome in AD 70, this warning may carry historical as well as spiritual weight. The verb *metanoēte* ('repent, change your mind and direction') is the fundamental demand of Jesus's ministry.
4. Jesus provides a second example, this time of accidental death rather than political violence, to make the same point from a different angle. The word *opheiletai* ('debtors, offenders, those who owe') frames sin as a debt — these eighteen did not owe God more than other Jerusalemites. The tower of

Siloam was likely part of the construction project associated with the Pool of Siloam in southeast Jerusalem.

5. The repetition of the repentance call with the variant *hōsautōs* ('just as, in the same way') instead of *homoiōs* (v. 3) reinforces the universal application. The double example (political violence, accidental disaster) covers every category of unexpected death and strips away any excuse for complacency.
6. The parable is unique to Luke and extends the repentance theme. A fig tree in a vineyard was common in Palestine — the tree would benefit from the vineyard's cultivated soil. The owner's expectation of fruit is entirely reasonable. The fig tree in Old Testament prophecy often symbolizes Israel (Jeremiah 8:13, Hosea 9:10, Micah 7:1), and the vineyard itself is Israel's classic symbol (Isaiah 5:1-7).
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Jeremiah 8:13. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Hosea 9:10. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Micah 7:1. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 5:1-7. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
7. Three years represents a full probationary period — fig trees typically bear fruit within three years of planting. The verb *katargei* ('renders useless, wastes, makes unproductive') suggests the tree is not merely barren but actively depletes the soil of nutrients that could benefit other plants. The owner's frustration is justified: the tree is not just unproductive but counterproductive.
8. The gardener's intercession introduces a note of grace into a judgment parable. He does not argue the tree is healthy or that the owner is wrong — he asks for one more year (*kai touto to etos*, 'this year also') and promises intensive care: digging around the roots (*skapsō*, to aerate the soil) and adding *kopria* ('manure, fertilizer'). If the gardener represents Jesus or the prophetic mission, the plea is for one final period of intensive ministry before judgment falls.
9. The parable leaves the outcome open — the tree may yet bear fruit. The conditional structure (*ean men... ei de mē ge*) creates genuine suspense: the reprieve is real but not permanent. The verb *ekkopseis* ('you will cut it down') remains the default outcome if repentance (fruit) does not come. The parable thus offers both hope and warning: there is still time, but not unlimited time.
10. This is the last recorded instance of Jesus teaching in a synagogue in Luke's Gospel. The Sabbath setting establishes the context for the controversy that follows — healing on the Sabbath was a persistent flashpoint between Jesus and religious authorities (cf. 6:6-11, 14:1-6).
11. The phrase *pneuma echousa astheneias* ('having a spirit of weakness') attributes her condition to a spiritual cause, which Jesus later identifies as Satanic bondage (v. 16). The condition described — chronic severe kyphosis (forward curvature of the spine) — left her unable to look up. The eighteen years of suffering parallel the eighteen killed by the Siloam tower (v. 4), possibly an intentional literary connection.
12. Jesus initiates the encounter — the woman does not approach or ask for healing. The perfect passive *apolelytai* ('you have been freed, you are released') uses liberation language: the same verb is used for releasing prisoners. The tense indicates a completed action with continuing results — her freedom is already accomplished in Jesus's declaration, even before the physical touch in v. 13.
13. The laying on of hands (*epethēken tas cheiras*) is Jesus's characteristic healing gesture, conveying physical contact and personal compassion. The word *parachrēma* ('immediately, at once') is a favorite Lukan term for the instantaneous nature of Jesus's healings. The verb *anōrthōthē* ('was straightened, was restored to upright') is the physical reversal of her eighteen-year condition. Her response — glorifying God (*edoxazen ton theon*) — is the model response to divine healing in Luke's Gospel.
14. The synagogue ruler's anger (*aganaktōn*, 'being indignant, being outraged') is directed at the crowd rather than at Jesus directly — a passive-aggressive approach that avoids direct confrontation with a popular teacher. His reasoning is based on Exodus 20:9 (six days for work) and classifies healing as 'work' that violates Sabbath rest. The irony is devastating: he sees no urgency in liberating a woman who has been bound for eighteen years.
14. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 20:9. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
15. Jesus's argument is from lesser to greater (*qal wahomer*): if the Sabbath permits untying an animal from a manger for basic care, it certainly permits untying a human from eighteen years of bondage. The verb *lyei* ('untie, loose, release') deliberately echoes the liberation language of v. 12 (*apolelytai*) and v. 16 (*lythēnai*). The address 'hypocrites' (plural) indicts not just the synagogue ruler but all who share his reasoning.
16. The title 'daughter of Abraham' (*thygatera Abraam*) is remarkable — the parallel 'son of Abraham' is used for Zacchaeus (19:9), but this is the only place in the Gospels where a woman is called 'daughter of Abraham.' It affirms her full membership in the covenant community. The framing of her illness as Satanic bondage (*edēsen ho satanas*, 'Satan bound') connects healing to spiritual liberation — the Sabbath, a day of rest and freedom, is the perfect day to break Satan's chains. The word *desmou* ('bond, chain, imprisonment') makes the metaphor explicit.
17. The contrast between the opponents' shame (*katēschnonto*, 'were put to shame, were humiliated') and the crowd's joy (*echairen*) creates a split response. The adjective *endoxois* ('glorious, splendid, honorable') is applied to all of Jesus's works — not just this healing but the full pattern of his ministry. Luke presents Jesus's ministry as a source of public delight that his opponents cannot suppress.

18. The double question (*tini homoia... tini homoiōsō*) is a standard rabbinic formula for introducing a parable: 'to what shall I liken X?' The word *oun* ('therefore') connects these parables to the preceding healing — the kingdom of God is at work in the liberation of the bent-over woman, and these parables describe its nature.
19. The mustard seed (*kokkō sinapeōs*) was proverbially the smallest seed known to Palestinian agriculture. Luke says it was planted in a garden (*kēpon*) rather than a field (Mark's version), reflecting a Gentile horticultural context. The tree image with birds nesting in its branches alludes to Daniel 4:12 and Ezekiel 17:23, where a great tree sheltering birds represents a kingdom that provides refuge for many nations. The point is disproportionate growth: the kingdom begins insignificantly but becomes vast.
19. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Daniel 4:12. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
19. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Ezekiel 17:23. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
20. The repeated question introduces a second parable that complements the first. Where the mustard seed illustrates visible, external growth, the leaven illustrates invisible, internal transformation.
21. Three sata of flour is approximately forty pounds — enough bread for a large feast or community gathering (cf. Genesis 18:6, where Sarah uses this amount for divine visitors). The verb *enekrypsen* ('hid, concealed') emphasizes the leaven's invisibility — once mixed in, it disappears but transforms everything. Leaven usually carries negative associations in Jewish thought (corruption, sin), making Jesus's positive use of it provocative. The kingdom works like leaven: hidden, pervasive, and transformative from within.
21. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 18:6. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
22. This travel notice reminds the reader of the journey framework established in 9:51. Luke periodically reorients the reader to the Jerusalem destination (cf. 9:51, 13:22, 17:11, 18:31, 19:11, 19:28). The phrase *poreian poioumenos eis Ierousalēm* ('making his journey toward Jerusalem') keeps the shadow of the cross over all the intervening teaching.
23. The question about the number of the saved (*ei oligoi hoi sōzomenoi*) was debated among Jewish teachers. Jesus characteristically refuses to answer the speculative question directly and instead issues a practical command — the issue is not how many will be saved but whether you will respond now.
24. The verb *agōnizesthe* ('strive, struggle, agonize, fight') is an athletic term — it describes the intense exertion of a competitor in a contest (the English 'agonize' comes from it). The 'narrow door' (*stenēs thyras*) suggests a door that requires effort and intentionality to pass through. The warning that many will 'seek' (*zētēsousin*) but 'not be able' (*ouk ischysousin*) implies that casual interest is insufficient — the door requires determined effort.
25. The image shifts from a narrow door to a closed door. The verb *apokleisei* ('shuts, locks') indicates finality — once locked, the door does not reopen. The phrase *ouk oida hymas pothen este* ('I do not know where you come from') is not a statement of ignorance but of non-recognition — the master refuses to acknowledge a relationship. This echoes Matthew 7:23's 'I never knew you.'
26. The claims offered — eating together and hearing his teaching — represent proximity without commitment. They have been near Jesus but have not entered through the narrow door of genuine discipleship. Luke's version (eating in his presence, hearing his street teaching) is more concrete than Matthew's (prophesying and casting out demons in his name), focusing on passive proximity rather than active ministry.
27. The repeated denial and the command to depart (*apostēte ap' emou*) echoes Psalm 6:8 (LXX). The phrase *ergatai adikias* ('workers of unrighteousness, practitioners of injustice') identifies the excluded not as strangers but as people whose lives were characterized by injustice — their proximity to Jesus did not translate into righteous living.
27. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Psalm 6:8. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
28. The 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' (*klauthnos kai brygmos tōn odontōn*) is a fixed formula for the anguish of exclusion that appears six times in Matthew but only here in Luke. The particular torment is not physical pain but the sight of the patriarchs and prophets inside the kingdom while the self-assured are 'thrown out' (*ekballomenous*) — the verb for casting out demons is used for casting out the presumptuous.
29. The four compass points (*anatolōn, dysmōn, borra, notou*) represent universal inclusion — people from all directions, meaning all nations. The verb *anaklithēsontai* ('will recline at table') indicates the messianic banquet, a well-established Jewish image for the kingdom's fulfillment (cf. Isaiah 25:6-8). The irony is that those who considered themselves insiders (v. 26) are excluded while outsiders from every direction take their places.
29. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 25:6-8. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
30. This great reversal saying summarizes the preceding teaching: those who assume priority (Israel's religious establishment) may find themselves displaced, while those considered last (Gentiles, sinners, the marginalized) may find themselves first. Luke's version is more balanced than some parallels — 'some' (*eisin*) in each category, not universal condemnation of 'the first' or universal elevation of 'the last.'
31. This episode is unique to Luke. Remarkably, it is Pharisees who warn Jesus — demonstrating that not all Pharisees were hostile (cf. Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea). Whether their warning was genuinely protective or an attempt to divert Jesus from his mission is debated. The threat from Herod Antipas continues the thread from 9:7-9.

32. Calling Herod 'that fox' (tē alōpeki tautē) is a pointed insult — in Jewish tradition, the fox was associated with cunning, destructiveness, and insignificance (as opposed to the lion's nobility and power). The phrase 'today and tomorrow and the third day' (sēmeron kai aurion kai tē tritē) is not a literal timetable but an idiom for 'a short, complete period.' The verb teleioumai ('I will be completed, I will reach my goal, I will be perfected') carries the sense of reaching the destined completion — the cross.
33. The word dei ('it is necessary, I must') again introduces divine necessity (cf. 9:22). The bitter irony of 'it is impossible for a prophet to perish outside Jerusalem' (ouk endechetai prophētēn apolesthai exō Ierusalēm) is devastating — Jerusalem, the holy city, is identified as the prophet-killing city. Herod cannot kill Jesus because that role belongs to Jerusalem. Jesus is not fleeing from death but walking toward it in the appointed place.
34. The double address 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem' echoes prophetic lament (cf. 'Martha, Martha' in 10:41; 'Simon, Simon' in 22:31). The hen image (ornis tēn heautēs nossian hypo tas pterygas) is strikingly maternal — Jesus expresses divine love through a mother-bird metaphor, echoing Deuteronomy 32:11 and Psalm 91:4, where God shelters Israel under protective wings. The tension between divine desire (ēthelēsa, 'I wanted') and human resistance (ouk ēthelēsate, 'you were not willing') preserves both God's initiative and human responsibility.
34. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 32:11. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
34. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Psalm 91:4. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
35. The phrase 'your house' (ho oikos hymōn) likely refers to the temple, which is now 'abandoned' (aphietai, 'left, forsaken') — God's protective presence is departing. The SBLGNT does not include 'desolate' (erēmos), which appears in some manuscripts. The quotation from Psalm 118:26 ('Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord') will be fulfilled at the triumphal entry (Luke 19:38), though whether that fulfillment is genuine or ironic is debated. The statement 'you will not see me' frames Jesus's departure as both judgment and future hope.
35. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Psalms 118:26 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.

14

Summary: *Luke 14 takes place entirely at a Sabbath meal in the house of a prominent Pharisee, where Jesus heals a man with dropsy, then delivers a series of teachings on humility, hospitality, and the cost of following him. He tells the parable of the great banquet — where the invited guests refuse to come and the host fills the hall with the poor, the crippled, and outsiders from the highways. The chapter closes with three stark sayings about counting the cost of discipleship: the tower builder, the warring king, and the demand to renounce everything.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The entire chapter is structured as a symposium — a Greco-Roman literary form in which teaching occurs at a banquet. Jesus subverts every expectation of the dinner party: he heals on the Sabbath (violating the host's assumptions), critiques the guests' jockeying for honor, instructs the host to invite the uninvitable, and tells a parable in which the original guests are replaced by social outcasts. The progression from table manners to radical discipleship is seamless — Luke presents following Jesus as a total social reorientation. The three 'cannot be my disciple' statements (vv. 26, 27, 33) are among the most demanding sayings in the Gospels.*

Translation Friction: *The healing of the man with dropsy (hydrops, fluid retention) on the Sabbath follows a pattern of Sabbath controversies in Luke (6:1-11; 13:10-17). Jesus's argument from the lesser to the greater (if you rescue a son or an ox, surely you can heal a person) assumes a shared ethical framework. The saying about hating father and mother (v. 26) uses miseō in its Semitic comparative sense — 'love less by comparison' — not as a command to feel hatred. The parable of the great banquet has a parallel in Matthew 22:1-14 but differs significantly in details.*

Connections: *The Sabbath healing connects to Luke 6:6-11 and 13:10-17. The banquet parable echoes Isaiah 25:6-8 (the messianic feast) and anticipates the eschatological meal themes of Luke 22. The cost-of-discipleship sayings connect to Luke 9:23-26 (taking up the cross) and 18:18-30 (the rich ruler). The 'salt' saying at the end parallels Mark 9:50 and Matthew 5:13.*

1One Sabbath, when he went to eat at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him closely. 2And there in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy. 3Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?" 4But they remained silent. So he took hold of the man, healed him, and sent him away. 5And he said to them, "Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well, will not immediately pull him out on a Sabbath day?" 6And they could not reply to this. 7He told a parable to those who had been invited, when he noticed how they were choosing

the places of honor, saying to them, ⁸"When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not recline at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by him. ⁹Then the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this person,' and then in disgrace you will begin to take the lowest place. ¹⁰But when you are invited, go and recline at the lowest place, so that when the one who invited you comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will have honor in the presence of all who are reclining at the table with you. ¹¹For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted." ¹²He also said to the one who had invited him, "When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, so that they may not invite you in return and you be repaid. ¹³But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴And you will be blessed, because they have nothing with which to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." ¹⁵When one of those reclining at the table with him heard these things, he said to him, "Blessed is the one who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" ¹⁶But he said to him, "A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. ¹⁷At the time of the banquet, he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' ¹⁸But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.' ¹⁹Another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to examine them. Please have me excused.' ²⁰And therefore I cannot come, another said, I have married a wife. ²¹So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.' ²²And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' ²³Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the roads and hedgerows and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled. ²⁴For I tell you, none of those men who were invited will taste my banquet.'" ²⁵Now large crowds were traveling with him, and he turned and said to them, ²⁶"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, wanting to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to mock him, ³⁰And was not able to finish, and declared, This man began to build. ³¹Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not first sit down and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²If not, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. ³³So therefore, any of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple. ³⁴"Salt is good, but if even salt has lost its taste, with what will it be seasoned? ³⁵It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear."

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The phrase *paraterēmenoi auton* ('watching him closely') carries the sense of hostile surveillance. The Sabbath meal was a formal occasion, and Jesus's presence at a Pharisee's table shows that he maintained social engagement with his critics even while challenging them. The 'ruler of the Pharisees' (*archontōn tōn Pharisaiōn*) was likely a synagogue leader who belonged to the Pharisaic party.
2. *Hydrops* (*δρωλικός*, 'dropsical') refers to edema — abnormal fluid retention causing visible swelling. This is the only occurrence of this condition in the New Testament. Whether the man was a guest or was placed there as a test is left ambiguous by Luke.
3. Jesus takes the initiative, addressing the tension directly. The *nomikoi* ('lawyers, experts in the Torah') and *Pharisaioi* ('Pharisees') represent the religious establishment's interpretive authority. The question forces them to articulate their position openly rather than hiding behind passive observation.
4. Their silence (*hēsychasan*) is telling — they cannot say healing is unlawful without appearing callous, nor can they affirm it without conceding Jesus's point. Jesus acts physically (*epilabomenos*, 'taking hold of') and then releases the man, removing him from the charged atmosphere.
5. The SBLGNT reads *huios* ('son') rather than *onos* ('donkey') — a textual variant with significant implications. If 'son,' the argument moves from human compassion; if 'donkey,' from animal husbandry. Either way, the *qal wahomer* ('lesser to greater') reasoning is clear: if emergency rescue is permissible, how much more healing? The Sabbath debates assume that saving life overrides Sabbath rest.

6. The verb *antapokrithēnai* ('to answer back, respond in opposition') implies they had no counter-argument. Jesus's logic has left them unable to defend their position without contradicting their own practice.
7. The *prōtoklisias* ('first couches, places of honor') were the reclining positions nearest the host at a formal meal. Jockeying for these positions was a visible display of social ambition. Jesus observes the behavior and uses it as a teaching occasion — the parable arises from direct observation of human vanity.
8. The wedding feast (*gamous*) setting raises the social stakes — weddings were the most public and hierarchical of ancient meals. The verb *kataklithō* ('recline') reflects the ancient practice of reclining on couches rather than sitting at tables. The advice echoes Proverbs 25:6-7.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Proverbs 25:6-7 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
9. The public humiliation (*meta aischnēs*, 'with shame') of being demoted would be devastating in an honor-shame culture. The scenario is socially realistic — hosts managed seating hierarchies carefully, and miscalculating one's status had real consequences.
10. The strategy of deliberate self-lowering leads to public elevation — a pattern that mirrors the theological principle stated in the next verse. The address 'Friend' (*Phile*) adds warmth to the public honor. The word *doxa* ('glory, honor') is the same used for God's glory — here applied to social standing, but pointing toward a deeper reality.
11. This axiom appears multiple times in Luke (1:52; 18:14) and throughout the Gospels. The passive voice ('will be humbled... will be exalted') is the divine passive — God is the implied agent. What appears as social advice becomes a statement about God's eschatological reversal of human hierarchies.
12. Jesus now turns from the guests to the host. The four categories — friends, brothers, relatives, rich neighbors — represent the entire network of reciprocal obligation in ancient Mediterranean society. The verb *antikalessōsin* ('invite in return') and the noun *antapodoma* ('repayment') expose the economy of social exchange: hospitality given to peers is an investment, not generosity.
13. The four categories — poor, crippled, lame, blind — are the same groups who will fill the banquet hall in the parable that follows (v. 21). These are people who cannot reciprocate, making the invitation pure grace. In the Qumran community (Dead Sea Scrolls), these same groups were explicitly excluded from the messianic banquet; Jesus inverts that exclusion.
14. The promise of repayment at 'the resurrection of the righteous' (*tē anastasei tōn dikaiōn*) shifts the reward from social reciprocity to eschatological recompense. The Pharisees believed in resurrection (unlike the Sadducees), so this appeal meets them on their own theological ground. True generosity is not unrewarded — it is rewarded by God, not by social peers.
15. This exclamation, perhaps pious but self-satisfied, triggers the parable of the great banquet. The speaker assumes he will be among those eating at the messianic feast. Jesus's parable will challenge exactly that assumption — the originally invited guests may find themselves excluded.
16. The 'great banquet' (*deipnon mega*) evokes the messianic feast of Isaiah 25:6. In ancient practice, a formal banquet involved two invitations: the initial announcement and a second summons when the meal was ready. The 'many' (*pollous*) who are invited represent Israel, the covenant people.
16. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 25:6. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
17. The second summons ('Come, for everything is now ready') represents the present moment of Jesus's ministry — the kingdom feast is being prepared and the invitation is going out. The single servant (*doulon*, 'slave') contrasts with Matthew's version, which has multiple servants.
18. The phrase *apo mias* ('with one accord, unanimously') emphasizes the collective nature of the refusal. The excuse is transparently absurd — no one buys a field without first inspecting it. The polite formula 'have me excused' (*eche me parētimenon*) masks the insult of rejecting a prepared feast.
19. Five yoke of oxen (ten animals) represents significant wealth — this is a man of means. Again, the excuse is implausible: one tests oxen before purchasing. The pattern of three excuses follows the rule of three in ancient storytelling.
20. This third excuse echoes Deuteronomy 24:5, where a newly married man is exempt from military service for one year. But a banquet is not military service, and this excuse — the most blunt of the three, without even asking to be excused — reveals that the refusals escalate in rudeness. Property, possessions, and family relationships all become obstacles to accepting the invitation.
20. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Deuteronomy 24:5 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
21. The master's anger (*orgistheis*) is justified — to refuse a prepared banquet was a grave social insult. The four groups summoned — poor, crippled, blind, lame — are the same groups from verse 13, now given narrative embodiment. These are the people who cannot repay the invitation, making this the feast of pure grace that Jesus commanded.
22. The report that 'still there is room' (*eti topos estin*) is theologically charged — the feast has capacity for more. God's banquet is not a zero-sum table. The inclusion of the marginalized does not fill the hall to capacity; grace expands to accommodate all who will come.
23. The movement extends beyond the city to 'roads and hedgerows' (*hodos kai phragmous*) — the places where travelers and the homeless would be found. The verb *anankason* ('compel, urge strongly') does not imply violence but the insistence needed to overcome the resistance of those who would never imagine themselves invited to such a feast. This second sending likely represents the Gentile mission.

24. The shift from 'his' banquet to 'my' banquet (mou tou deipnou) is striking — the master of the parable speaks in a way that bleeds into Jesus's own voice. The exclusion is self-imposed: the original guests chose not to come. The door remains open to the unexpected guests who did accept.
25. The scene shifts from the Pharisee's house to the open road. Jesus 'turned' (strapheis) — a deliberate, confrontational gesture directed at those who were following casually. What follows are the most stringent discipleship demands in the Gospels.
26. The verb misēi ('hate') must be understood in its Semitic sense of 'love less by comparison' (cf. Genesis 29:31, where Leah is 'hated' meaning 'less loved'; Malachi 1:2-3). Matthew's parallel (10:37) clarifies: 'loves father or mother more than me.' The demand is not emotional hostility but absolute priority — when loyalties conflict, Jesus claims first allegiance over every human bond, including self-preservation (tēn psychēn heautou, 'his own life/soul').
26. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 29:31. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
26. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Malachi 1:2-3. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
27. The stauros ('cross') was not a religious symbol in Jesus's time but an instrument of Roman execution — the most shameful and painful death available. To 'carry one's cross' meant to walk to one's own execution. The image would have been shocking and literal for Jesus's audience. This is the second 'cannot be my disciple' statement.
28. The tower (pyrgon) could be a farm watchtower or a defensive structure. The verb psēphizei ('calculate, count with pebbles') gives us the concept of 'counting the cost.' Jesus is not discouraging discipleship but demanding informed commitment — the parable warns against starting what one cannot finish.
29. The abandoned foundation becomes a permanent monument to failed ambition. The verb empaizein ('to mock, ridicule') carries the sting of public shame — the same word used for the mocking of Jesus at his trial (Luke 22:63; 23:11).
30. The mockers' words are devastating in their simplicity. The verb ērxato ('began') paired with ouk ischysen ('was not able') creates a stark contrast between aspiration and failure.
31. The second parable escalates from personal construction to national warfare. The odds are two-to-one against — the question is whether the king can realistically prevail. Like the tower builder, the king must assess his resources before committing. The parallel to discipleship is clear: following Jesus is a total commitment with opposition guaranteed.
32. The word presbeian ('delegation, embassy') is the root of 'presbyter' and 'ambassador.' The wise king who cannot win negotiates — but Jesus does not offer a negotiation option for discipleship. The parable's logic demands total commitment because there is no middle ground with God.
33. The third 'cannot be my disciple' statement specifies the cost: apotassetai pasin tois heautou hyparchousin ('renounce all his own possessions'). The verb apotassomai means 'to say farewell to, take leave of, renounce.' This is not merely spiritual detachment but literal willingness to release everything. Luke's Gospel consistently highlights the danger of wealth (6:20-26; 12:13-21; 16:19-31; 18:18-25).
34. The salt saying (also in Matthew 5:13 and Mark 9:50) serves as a warning metaphor following the discipleship demands. Salt that has lost its saltiness (mōranthē, literally 'become foolish' — the same root as 'moron') is useless. A disciple who will not pay the cost is like flavorless salt — purposeless. Chemically, pure sodium chloride cannot lose its salinity, but the impure salt from the Dead Sea region could leach and lose effectiveness.
35. Useless salt cannot even serve as fertilizer (eis gēn, 'for the land') or as a catalyst in a compost heap (eis koprian, 'for the manure pile'). It has absolutely no remaining function. The chapter closes with the same formula that concluded the Sower parable in chapter 8: 'The one who has ears to hear, let him hear' — an urgent call to active listening and obedience.

15

Summary: Luke 15 is the Lost Chapter — three parables of loss, search, and joyful recovery, told in response to Pharisees and scribes who grumble that Jesus 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' A shepherd leaves ninety-nine sheep to find one lost lamb. A woman tears her house apart to find one lost coin. A father watches the horizon for a son who squandered his inheritance in a far country. Each parable culminates in extravagant celebration, and together they form Jesus's most sustained defense of his scandalous welcome of outcasts. The Parable of the Prodigal Son (15:11-32) is widely regarded as the greatest short story ever told — a narrative that moves from ruin to restoration, from death to life, and closes with an unanswered question to the older brother standing outside the party.

What Makes This Remarkable: *The three parables form a deliberate progression: a shepherd (male, outdoors, one of a hundred), a woman (female, indoors, one of ten), and a father (domestic, one of two). The ratio of lost to found intensifies — one percent, ten percent, fifty percent — making the stakes increasingly personal. The Prodigal Son parable is unique to Luke and contains some of the most psychologically complex characterization in ancient literature. The father's running (v. 20) would have been considered undignified for an elder in Middle Eastern culture — a deliberate humiliation undertaken for love. The older brother's refusal to enter the feast mirrors the Pharisees' refusal to celebrate Jesus's ministry to sinners. The parable has no resolution: we never learn whether the older brother enters.*

Translation Friction: *The phrase 'righteous persons who need no repentance' (v. 7) may be ironic — Jesus may be describing the Pharisees as they see themselves rather than as they truly are. The younger son's descent to feeding pigs (v. 15) represents the ultimate defilement for a Jewish audience, as pigs were unclean animals. The 'far country' (chōran makran) symbolizes moral and spiritual distance from the father. The father's statement 'this son of mine was dead and is alive again' (v. 24) uses resurrection language for a spiritual restoration — the same death-to-life pattern that defines Christian conversion.*

Connections: *The parables respond to the Pharisees' complaint in verse 2, which echoes Luke 5:30 and 19:7. The joy-in-heaven theme connects to Luke 10:20. The Prodigal Son anticipates the Zacchaeus story (19:1-10) and Jesus's declaration that 'the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost' (19:10). The father's compassion (splanchnistheis, v. 20) uses the same word applied to Jesus in Luke 7:13. The older brother's anger mirrors Jonah's anger at God's mercy toward Nineveh (Jonah 4).*

¹Now all the tax collectors and sinners were drawing near to him to hear him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." ³So he told them this parable: ⁴"What man among you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵Rejoicing, when he has found it, he layeth it on his shoulders. ⁶Rejoice with me, when he comes home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, and declared to them. For I have found my sheep which was lost. ⁷I tell you, in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. ⁸"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost!' ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents." ¹¹And he said, "A man had two sons. ¹²The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that is coming to me.' So he divided his livelihood between them. ¹³Not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴When he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶And he was longing to be fed with the carob pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I am perishing here with hunger! ¹⁸I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.'" ²⁰And he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²²But the father said to his servants, 'Quickly, bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ²³And bring the fattened calf and slaughter it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate. ²⁵He heard musick and dancing, and now his elder son was in the field — and as he arrived and drew nigh to the house. ²⁶And asked what these things meant, and he called one of the servants. ²⁷The servant said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' ²⁸But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and was pleading with him, ²⁹He answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve you, neither transgressed I at any time your

commandment — and yet you never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:.³⁰ But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him!' ³¹But he said to him, 'Child, you are always with me, and everything that is mine is yours. ³²But it was necessary to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive, and was lost and is found.'"

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The word *pantes* ('all') is hyperbolic but emphasizes that Jesus attracted the very people the religious establishment avoided. 'Tax collectors' (*telōnai*) were despised as collaborators with Rome and assumed to be corrupt. 'Sinners' (*hamartōloi*) was a catch-all term for those who did not observe the Torah as the Pharisees defined it. That they came 'to hear him' (*akouein autou*) shows they were drawn to his message, not merely his miracles.
2. The verb *diegongyzo* ('were grumbling') echoes Israel's grumbling in the wilderness (Exodus 16:7-8; Numbers 14:27) — Luke draws a deliberate parallel between the Pharisees and rebellious Israel. Table fellowship (*synesthiei*, 'eats with') in ancient Judaism implied acceptance and equality; eating with sinners was not merely socializing but a theological statement. This complaint provides the occasion for all three parables that follow.
2. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 16:7-8. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
2. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Numbers 14:27. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
3. Luke introduces all three stories as one parable (*tēn parabolēn tautēn*, singular), suggesting they form a unified literary whole — three variations on one theme of loss, search, and celebration.
4. The opening 'What man among you' (*tis anthrōpos ex hymōn*) invites the audience to place themselves in the shepherd's role. The expected answer is 'Of course you would go.' Leaving ninety-nine in the *erēmō* ('wilderness, open country') is risky — the argument is that the lost sheep's value justifies the risk. A hundred sheep represented substantial wealth in first-century Palestine.
5. The image of the shepherd carrying the sheep on his shoulders (*epi tous ōmous*) became one of the earliest Christian artistic motifs. The lost sheep does not walk back on its own — the shepherd carries it. The participle *chairōn* ('rejoicing') is emphatic: this is not dutiful retrieval but exuberant recovery. The image echoes Isaiah 40:11 and Ezekiel 34:11-16, where God himself is the shepherd who seeks the lost.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Isaiah 40:11 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Ezekiel 34:11-16 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
6. The verb *syncharēte* ('rejoice together with') demands communal celebration — joy over recovery cannot be experienced alone. This detail sets up the application in verse 7: heaven itself celebrates communally over one repentant sinner. The shepherd does not scold the sheep; he throws a party.
7. The phrase 'righteous persons who need no repentance' (*dikaiois hoitines ou chreian echousin metanoias*) may be gently ironic — Jesus may be describing the Pharisees as they perceive themselves. Alternatively, it may acknowledge genuinely faithful people while insisting that recovery of the lost produces a particular kind of joy. The word *metanoēō* ('to repent, change one's mind') involves a complete reorientation of life, not merely feeling sorry.
8. The drachma was a Greek silver coin roughly equivalent to a day's wage. Ten drachmas may represent her entire savings, or they may have been sewn into a headband worn as a marriage token (similar to coins on a Palestinian bridal headdress). Losing one-tenth of her wealth warrants a thorough search. The lamp, sweeping, and diligent searching reflect the dark, windowless interior of a typical Palestinian peasant home with a packed-earth floor.
9. The exact same pattern as the shepherd's celebration: communal joy over recovery. The feminine forms (*tas philas kai geitonas*, 'her female friends and neighbors') reflect the social world of women in a gender-segregated society. Jesus's willingness to cast God in a female role (a woman searching for what is precious) is remarkable in its cultural context.
10. The phrase 'joy before the angels' (*chara enōpion tōn angelōn*) is a reverential circumlocution — the joy is God's own, expressed 'in the presence of his angels. This second application reinforces the first: heaven's economy values the recovery of the lost above all else.
11. The opening is deceptively simple. 'Two sons' immediately signals a story about contrasting responses — a familiar pattern in the Hebrew Bible (Cain/Abel, Esau/Jacob, Joseph and his brothers). The father, not either son, is the central character — some scholars prefer the title 'The Parable of the Prodigal Father' (prodigal in the sense of extravagantly generous).
12. The request is culturally outrageous — asking for one's inheritance while the father is still alive is tantamount to wishing the father dead. Under Jewish law (Deuteronomy 21:17), the younger son would receive one-third of the estate. The father's compliance (*dieilen*, 'he divided') without argument or rebuke is the first sign of his extraordinary character. The word *bion* ('livelihood, means of living') emphasizes that the father is giving away his actual resources, not merely liquid assets.

12. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Deuteronomy 21:17. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
13. The phrase *chōran makran* ('distant country') represents both geographic and spiritual distance from the father. The adverb *asōtōs* ('dissolutely, wastefully') gives us the English word 'prodigal' — it means reckless extravagance. The verb *dieskorpisen* ('scattered, squandered') is vivid: he did not merely spend his inheritance but scattered it like seed on barren ground.
14. The convergence of personal bankruptcy and natural disaster creates complete destitution. The verb *hystereisthai* ('to be in need, lack, fall short') is the same word Paul uses for the human condition in Romans 3:23 ('all have sinned and fall short'). The son's self-inflicted poverty is compounded by circumstances beyond his control.
15. The verb *ekollēthē* ('joined himself to, attached himself to') suggests desperation rather than genuine employment — he clung to this foreigner for survival. For a Jewish audience, feeding pigs (choirous) represents the absolute nadir of defilement. Pigs were unclean (Leviticus 11:7), and tending them placed the son in daily contact with what the Torah forbade. He has reached the furthest possible point from his father's house.
15. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Leviticus 11:7 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
16. The *keratia* ('carob pods') were used as animal feed — long, dark pods from the carob tree, sometimes called 'St. John's bread.' The son is now lower than the pigs: they eat while he goes hungry. The phrase 'no one gave him anything' (*oudeis edidou autō*) underscores his total abandonment — in the far country, there is no community, no compassion, no father.
17. The phrase *eis heauton elthōn* ('coming to himself') is a turning point — it implies he had been 'beside himself,' alienated from his true identity. This is the moment of self-awareness that precedes repentance. His reasoning is initially pragmatic rather than spiritual: the hired servants (*misthioi*, day laborers with no family status) eat better than he does. Whether his motive is genuine contrition or strategic self-interest, the movement toward the father begins.
18. The verb *anastas* ('rising up') is the same root as 'resurrection' (*anastasis*) — the son's return begins with rising from his degradation. His prepared speech echoes David's confession in Psalm 51:4 ('Against you, you only, have I sinned'). 'Against heaven' (*eis ton ouranon*) is a reverential circumlocution for 'against God' — the sin is not merely against the father but against the divine order.
18. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Psalm 51:4 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
19. The son's planned demotion from son to hired servant (*misthios*) shows he understands he has forfeited his status. A hired servant had no family rights but received wages and food. The son's self-assessment is accurate — he has squandered everything — but the father's response will overturn this calculation entirely.
20. This is the emotional center of the parable. That the father 'saw him while still far off' implies he had been watching — scanning the road, waiting. The verb *esplanchnisthē* ('was moved with compassion') describes a visceral, gut-level response (from *splanchna*, 'intestines, inward parts'). The father's running (*dramōn*) would have required him to lift his robes, exposing his legs — an act considered deeply undignified for an elder in Middle Eastern culture. He humiliates himself to reach his son before the village can shame him. The verb *katēphilēsen* ('kissed fervently, kissed repeatedly') is intensive — not a formal greeting but an outpouring of affection.
21. The son delivers his rehearsed speech (from vv. 18-19) but never gets to finish — the crucial last line ('make me as one of your hired servants') is cut off by the father's instructions to the servants. The father does not allow the demotion to be spoken. The confession is received; the proposed terms are overridden by grace.
22. Every item is a symbol of restored sonship, not servanthood. The 'best robe' (*stolēn tēn prōtēn*, literally 'the first robe') is the father's own finest garment — clothing him in the father's honor. The ring (*daktylion*) signifies authority, likely a signet ring used for sealing documents and transacting business. The sandals (*hypodēmata*) distinguish a free son from a slave, who went barefoot. The father does not negotiate or set conditions — he restores fully and immediately.
23. The 'fattened calf' (*ton moschon ton siteuton*) was grain-fed and reserved for the most significant occasions — its slaughter would feed the entire village. This is not a private family meal but a community feast, paralleling the communal celebrations of the lost sheep and lost coin parables. The verb *euphranthōmen* ('let us celebrate, be glad') is the same word used in the Septuagint for feasting in God's presence.
24. The father uses resurrection language: *nekros ēn kai anezēsen* ('was dead and has come alive'). The son's departure was a kind of death; his return is a kind of resurrection. The parallel 'lost and found' (*apolōlōs kai heurethē*) connects this parable to the lost sheep and lost coin — all three stories culminate in the same recovery and the same celebration. The verb *ērξαντο* ('they began') implies the celebration is just getting started — setting up the older brother's arrival.
25. The older son enters the story for the first time, and he enters from the outside — he has been working in the field, dutifully serving his father. The *symphōnias* ('music,' literally 'sounds together') and *chorōn* ('dancing') indicate a major celebration. He approaches the party as an outsider, which is precisely the Pharisees' position relative to Jesus's welcome of sinners.
26. That the older son must ask a servant what is happening reveals his emotional distance from his father's household — he is physically present but relationally absent. The verb *epynthaneto* ('was inquiring') is in the imperfect, suggesting ongoing questioning.

27. The servant's report is matter-of-fact: 'your brother' (ho adelphos sou) and 'your father' (ho patēr sou) — family language that the older son will shortly reject. The word *hygiainonta* ('healthy, safe and sound') is the root of 'hygiene' — the father is celebrating not just the son's return but his physical survival.
28. The older son's anger (*ōrgisthē*) and refusal to enter parallels the Pharisees' anger at Jesus's table fellowship with sinners. His refusal to enter is as much an insult as the younger son's departure — in both cases, a son rejects the father's household. And in both cases, the father goes out: he ran to meet the younger son, and now he comes out to plead with the older. The verb *parekalei* ('was pleading, urging, entreating') is in the imperfect — sustained, patient appeal.
29. The older son's complaint reveals a servile mentality: *douleūō soi* ('I have slaved for you') — he sees himself as a servant, not a son. He has obeyed commands (*entolēn*, 'commandment') but missed the relationship. The contrast between a young goat (*eriphon*, the cheapest animal for a feast) and the fattened calf underscores his sense of injustice. His complaint is factually plausible but spiritually blind — he has had access to everything his father owned (v. 31) and never realized it.
30. The older son refuses to say 'my brother,' using instead the distancing 'this son of yours' (*ho huios sou houtos*) — a deliberate disowning. He adds the detail 'with prostitutes' (*meta pornōn*), which the narrative never mentioned — he either knows more than the story tells or is embellishing to strengthen his case. The verb *kataphagōn* ('devoured, consumed') is contemptuous. His resentment is directed as much at the father's generosity as at the brother's sin.
31. The father's response begins with *teknon* ('child') — an intimate, affectionate address. The statement 'you are always with me' (*sy pantote met' emou ei*) is both reassurance and gentle rebuke: the older son has always had access to the father's presence and possessions but has experienced neither as gift. 'Everything that is mine is yours' (*panta ta ema sa estin*) is a staggering declaration — the father withholds nothing. The older son's poverty is not material but relational.
32. The father gently corrects the older son's language: where the son said 'this son of yours' (v. 30), the father says 'this brother of yours' (*ho adelphos sou houtos*) — insisting on the fraternal bond. The verb *edei* ('it was necessary') carries divine compulsion — the celebration is not optional but morally required by the nature of what has happened. The parable ends without resolution: we do not know whether the older brother enters the feast. The open ending forces the Pharisees — and every reader — to decide: will you join the celebration or remain outside in your resentment? The repeated death-to-life, lost-to-found formula seals the chapter's theology: God's joy over the recovery of the lost is the heartbeat of the kingdom.

16

Summary: *Luke 16 contains two of Jesus's most provocative teachings about wealth. The Parable of the Shrewd Manager (16:1-13) presents a dishonest steward who, facing termination, reduces his master's debtors' bills to secure future friendships — and is commended for his shrewdness. Jesus draws the paradoxical lesson that worldly people are more strategic than 'children of light' and urges his followers to use wealth to gain eternal friends. A series of sayings on faithfulness, the impossibility of serving both God and money, and the enduring authority of the Law follows. The chapter culminates in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (16:19-31), where a wealthy man who ignored a beggar at his gate finds their positions reversed in the afterlife — and Abraham refuses to send a warning to the rich man's brothers, declaring that Moses and the Prophets are sufficient.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The Parable of the Shrewd Manager is perhaps the most debated parable in the Gospels. Jesus appears to commend dishonesty, but the commendation is for shrewdness (*phronimōs*), not for the fraud itself — the steward's cleverness in using present resources to secure a future relationship becomes an analogy for how disciples should use material wealth to secure eternal outcomes. The Rich Man and Lazarus is the only parable in which a character is named (Lazarus), and it provides the most detailed picture of the afterlife in Jesus's teaching. The rich man is never condemned for a specific sin — his offense is indifference to suffering at his own gate. The final line ('neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead') is deeply ironic in light of Jesus's own resurrection and the continued unbelief it met.*

Translation Friction: *The Shrewd Manager parable's moral logic has troubled interpreters for centuries. The manager may have been removing his own commission from the bills (making his action honest), or he may have been canceling usurious interest forbidden by Torah (making his action just), or he may simply be a rogue whose worldly cleverness Jesus repurposes as a spiritual lesson. We render the Greek as given and let the translator notes present the interpretive options. The word 'Hades' (*hadēs*) in verse 23 is the Greek equivalent of Hebrew Sheol — the realm of the dead — not the later Christian concept of hell. The 'great chasm' (*chasma mega*) is unique to this passage.*

Connections: The Shrewd Manager continues Luke's sustained focus on wealth and discipleship (12:13-34; 14:33; 18:18-30; 19:1-10). The Pharisees' love of money (v. 14) connects to their role throughout Luke as opponents who misunderstand the kingdom. The Rich Man and Lazarus echoes the Magnificat's reversal theme (1:52-53) and the Beatitudes/Woes of 6:20-26. Abraham's refusal to send Lazarus back foreshadows the resurrection appearances and the persistent unbelief of Acts. The 'Law and Prophets' (v. 16) connects to Luke 24:27, 44.

1He also said to his disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and this manager was reported to him as squandering his possessions. 2So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.' 3The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. 4I know what I will do, so that when I am removed from the management, people will receive me into their homes.' 5So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6He said, 'A hundred measures of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and write fifty.' 7Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and write eighty.' 8The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the children of light. 9And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal dwellings. 10The one who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and the one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. 11If then you have not been faithful with unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? 12And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? 13No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." 14The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. 15He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before people, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among people is an abomination in the sight of God. 16The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is being proclaimed, and everyone is urged forcefully into it. 17But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fall. 18Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and the one who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery. 19"Then there was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, feasting sumptuously every day. 20And a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, 21Longing to be nourished with the scraps that fell from the rich man's table — moreover the dogs arrived and licked his sores. 22The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. 23And in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off, and Lazarus at his side. 24And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' 25But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you received your good things during your life, and Lazarus likewise bad things. But now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. 26And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to cross from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross from there to us.' 27He said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house, 28For I have five brothers and sisters. That he may testify to them, lest they also come into this location of torment. 29But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' 30He said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The *oikonomos* ('manager, steward') was responsible for administering the master's estate — a position of significant trust and authority. The verb *diaskorpizōn* ('squandering, scattering') is the same word used for the prodigal son's waste in 15:13, creating a verbal link between the two parables. The passive *dieblēthē* ('was reported, was accused') does not confirm whether the accusation was true.
2. The demand *apodos ton logon* ('give the account, render the reckoning') uses commercial language for a financial audit. The phrase *ou dynē eti oikonomein* ('you are no longer able to manage') is a termination notice. The manager is given a brief window to close the books — a window he will exploit.

3. The internal monologue (eipen en heautō, 'said within himself') parallels the prodigal son's self-reflection in 15:17. The manager's self-assessment is brutally honest: he cannot do manual labor (skaptein, 'to dig') and will not beg (epaitein). He is a white-collar worker facing unemployment with no fallback skills. His dilemma forces the creative — if ethically questionable — solution that follows.
4. The verb egnōn ('I know, I have realized') marks the eureka moment. His strategy is to create a network of obligation: by reducing the debtors' bills, he will have friends who owe him favors when he loses his position. The phrase dexōntai me eis tous oikous autōn ('they will receive me into their houses') will be echoed in verse 9 with 'eternal dwellings.'
5. The chreopheiletōn ('debtors') were likely tenant farmers or merchants who owed the master commodities as rent or payment. The manager acts individually with each debtor (hena hekaston, 'one by one'), creating personal obligation rather than a collective arrangement.
6. A batos was approximately eight to nine gallons; a hundred batous of olive oil was a substantial debt — roughly 800-900 gallons, the yield of about 150 olive trees. The reduction of fifty percent is enormous. The urgency (tacheōs, 'quickly') reflects the need to act before the termination takes effect. Whether the reduction represents the manager's commission, the master's usurious interest, or outright fraud is debated.
7. A koros was approximately ten to twelve bushels; a hundred koroi of wheat equaled roughly 1,000-1,200 bushels — a very large commercial quantity. The reduction here is only twenty percent, compared to fifty percent for the oil. The different percentages may reflect different commission rates or interest structures on different commodities.
8. The crucial question: does 'the master' (ho kyrios) refer to the rich man in the parable or to Jesus? Most interpreters read it as the rich man, who grudgingly admires the manager's cleverness even though it cost him money. The commendation is for phronimōs ('shrewdly, wisely') — strategic thinking about the future — not for the dishonesty (adikias). The contrast between 'children of this age' (huioi tou aiōnos toutou) and 'children of light' (huios tou phōtos) is a wisdom observation: worldly people invest more strategic effort in their temporal futures than God's people invest in their eternal ones.
9. Jesus now applies the parable. The mamōna tēs adikias ('mammon of unrighteousness') is Aramaic mammon ('wealth, property') modified by a genitive of quality — 'wealth characterized by its worldly nature.' The instruction is: use material resources to build relationships that have eternal significance. The 'eternal dwellings' (aiōnious skēnas, literally 'eternal tents') contrast with the temporary shelters of this life. The identity of 'they' (dexōntai) is debated — the poor who benefit from generosity, the angels, or God himself.
10. This proverb establishes the principle that character is consistent across scale. Small responsibilities reveal the character that will govern large ones. The adjective elachistō ('very little, least') applied to wealth frames material possessions as the smallest arena of faithfulness — preparation for greater spiritual responsibilities.
11. The contrast between adikō mamōna ('unrighteous wealth') and to alēthinon ('the true, genuine thing') is sharp. Material wealth is not the 'real' treasure — it is a test, a proving ground. Failure in this lesser arena disqualifies one from receiving the greater spiritual treasure. The question format (tis hymin pisteusei, 'who will entrust to you?') implies God as the one who evaluates and entrusts.
12. The word allotriō ('another's, belonging to someone else') reframes all material wealth as borrowed — it belongs to God, and humans are stewards, not owners. The 'your own' (to hymeteron) refers to spiritual inheritance that becomes genuinely one's own. The implication is radical: everything material is on loan; only the spiritual treasure is truly yours.
13. Luke adds oiketēs ('household servant') to the saying found also in Matthew 6:24. The word douleuein ('to serve as a slave') implies total ownership — a slave cannot divide loyalty. The personification of mamōna as a competing kyrios ('master') is the climax of the wealth teaching: money is not neutral but a power that demands allegiance. The final statement is absolute: ou dynasthe ('you are not able') — this is not a recommendation but a declaration of impossibility.
14. Luke's editorial comment — philargyroi ('lovers of money,' literally 'lovers of silver') — is pointed. The verb exemyktērizon ('ridiculed, sneered at,' literally 'turned up their noses') suggests contemptuous dismissal. Their mockery reveals that Jesus's teaching about wealth has struck a nerve.
15. The phrase dikaiountes heautous ('justifying yourselves') means constructing a public reputation of righteousness. The word bdelygma ('abomination') is the strongest term of revulsion in biblical Greek — the same word used for the 'abomination of desolation' in Daniel 9:27 and Mark 13:14. What humans celebrate (wealth, status, prestige), God may find detestable. The reversal is total.
15. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Daniel 9:27 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
16. This compressed saying divides salvation history: the era of 'the Law and the Prophets' extends to John the Baptist, after which the kingdom of God is actively proclaimed. The verb biazetai is ambiguous — it can mean 'everyone forces their way in' (middle voice) or 'everyone is being urged/pressed in' (passive). We render the passive sense, which fits Luke's theology of God's initiative, but the middle sense ('everyone is pressing into it eagerly') is also possible.
17. The keraia ('horn, stroke, serif') refers to the tiny decorative marks distinguishing similar Hebrew letters (such as beth and kaph). Jesus affirms the Law's enduring authority in the strongest possible terms — the cosmos will dissolve before the smallest detail of Torah fails. This statement prevents the previous verse from being read as abrogation of the Law.
18. This saying, placed between statements about the Law's permanence and the Rich Man and Lazarus parable, may serve as a concrete example of the Law's enduring moral authority. The prohibition is absolute in Luke's version — no exception clause appears as in Matthew 19:9. The verb moicheuei ('commits adultery') applies to both scenarios.

- 19.** The porphyran ('purple') was the most expensive dye in the ancient world, extracted from murex sea snails. The bysson ('fine linen') was imported Egyptian fabric. Together they represent extreme luxury. The phrase *euphrainomenos kath' hēmeran lamprōs* ('celebrating splendidly every day') means his entire life was one continuous feast — while Lazarus starved at his gate. The rich man is traditionally called 'Dives' (Latin for 'rich'), but the text never names him.
- 20.** Lazarus (Lazaros) is the Greek form of the Hebrew Eleazar ('God helps') — the name itself is ironic, as no human helps him. He is the only named character in any of Jesus's parables, which may suggest a historical basis or may serve to personalize the poor man in contrast to the unnamed rich man. The passive *ebeblēto* ('had been placed, was lying') suggests he was too weak to position himself. The *pylōna* ('gate, entrance') implies a large, wealthy estate.
- 21.** The parallel with the prodigal son's hunger is deliberate (*epithymōn chortasthēnai*, 'longing to be fed' — cf. 15:16). But whereas the prodigal chose his degradation, Lazarus's suffering is involuntary. The dogs (*kynes*) are unclean street scavengers, not pets — their licking adds humiliation to misery. Whether Lazarus actually received the fallen scraps is left unclear; the text says he 'longed' for them.
- 22.** The contrast in death is stark: Lazarus is escorted by angels to 'Abraham's bosom' (*ton kolpon Abraam*) — the place of honor at the patriarchal feast, the position of the beloved guest reclining next to the host. The rich man simply 'died and was buried' (*etaphē*) — his funeral was presumably grand, but no angels attend him. The reversal from their earthly conditions has begun.
- 23.** The Greek *hadēs* corresponds to the Hebrew *Sheol* — the realm of the dead, not the later Christian concept of hell as a place of final punishment. In Jewish thought of this period, Hades contained both the righteous and the unrighteous in separate compartments. The rich man can see Abraham and Lazarus but cannot cross to them — proximity without access. The word *basanois* ('torments') originally referred to a touchstone for testing metals, then came to mean torture or torment.
- 24.** Even in Hades, the rich man treats Lazarus as a servant to be dispatched on errands — 'send Lazarus' (*pempson Lazaron*). He has learned Lazarus's name (he always knew who was at his gate) but has not grasped the reversal. The request for a finger-dip of water is pathetically minimal, measuring the depth of his suffering. The address 'Father Abraham' claims covenant identity — he considers himself Abraham's heir despite his behavior.
- 25.** Abraham addresses him as *teknon* ('child') — acknowledging the covenant relationship while denying the request. The principle is reversal: *ta agatha sou* ('your good things') in life are spent; Lazarus's suffering is now compensated. The verb *parakaleitai* ('is comforted') is the same root as *paraklētos* ('comforter, advocate'). The reversal echoes the Beatitudes and Woes of Luke 6:20-26.
- 26.** The *chasma mega* ('great chasm') represents the irreversible finality of the afterlife condition. The perfect passive *estēriktoi* ('has been fixed, established') indicates a permanent divine arrangement, not a temporary boundary. The impossibility of crossing in either direction means there is no post-mortem remedy — choices made in life determine one's eternal state.
- 27.** The rich man's second request is to send Lazarus as a messenger — still treating him as an errand-runner. But the request also reveals that the rich man now understands something he failed to grasp in life: his choices had consequences, and his brothers are making the same ones.
- 28.** The five brothers suggest a large, wealthy family. The verb *diamartyrētai* ('warn, solemnly testify') is a compound verb intensifying the urgency. The 'place of torment' (*topon touton tēs basanou*) is the first time the rich man names his location. His compassion for his brothers, absent for Lazarus in life, arrives too late.
- 29.** Abraham's response is that the existing revelation — the Torah ('Moses') and the Prophets — is sufficient. The Hebrew Scriptures already command justice for the poor, generosity to the needy, and compassion for the suffering (Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Isaiah 58:6-7; Amos 2:6-7). No additional supernatural sign is needed. The imperative *akousatōsan* ('let them hear, let them listen') echoes the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4) and the repeated refrain 'let him hear' from the parables.
- 29.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 15:7-11. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 29.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 58:6-7. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 29.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Amos 2:6-7. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 29.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 6:4. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 30.** The rich man contradicts Abraham — *ouchi* ('No!') — insisting that a supernatural visitor from the dead would succeed where Scripture has failed. His assumption is that the problem is insufficient evidence, not hardness of heart. The verb *metanoēsousin* ('they will repent') is confident but mistaken, as the next verse will make clear.
- 31.** Abraham's final word is devastating in its irony. The verb *anastē* ('rises,' from *anistēmi*, the standard word for resurrection) points beyond the parable to Jesus's own resurrection — and the fact that many still did not believe even after it occurred (cf. Acts 4:1-2; 17:32). The verb *peisthēsontai* ('they will be convinced, persuaded') suggests that the problem is not evidence but willingness. Those who ignore the witness of Scripture will not be moved by miracles. The parable ends on this note of solemn warning: no sign can substitute for listening to what God has already spoken.

17

Summary: *Luke 17 contains a collection of Jesus's teachings on stumbling blocks, forgiveness, faith, and duty, followed by the healing of ten lepers (only the Samaritan returns to give thanks), and a discourse on the coming of the kingdom of God. Jesus teaches that the kingdom does not come with observable signs but is 'in your midst,' then warns of the sudden, visible nature of the Son of Man's coming, comparing it to the days of Noah and Lot.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The healing of the ten lepers is unique to Luke and highlights his recurring theme of Samaritan faithfulness contrasted with Jewish ingratitude. The phrase 'the kingdom of God is among you' (entos hymōn) is one of the most debated sayings in the Gospels — does it mean 'within you' (interior/spiritual) or 'in your midst' (present in Jesus's person)? The discourse on the Son of Man's coming blends language from Daniel 7 with flood and fire imagery from Genesis, creating an eschatological tapestry that resists neat systematization.*

Translation Friction: *Verse 21's entos hymōn is genuinely ambiguous — 'within you' and 'in your midst' are both linguistically defensible. We render 'in your midst' as the more contextually appropriate reading (Jesus is addressing Pharisees, to whom 'within you' seems unlikely), but note the alternative. The servant parable in verses 7-10 uses the language of slavery, which we render transparently.*

Connections: *The ten lepers narrative connects to 2 Kings 5 (Naaman the Syrian leper) — another foreigner healed when Israelites were not. The Noah and Lot comparisons draw from Genesis 6-7 and 19. The 'days of the Son of Man' language echoes Daniel 7:13-14. The faith-as-mustard-seed saying appears also in Matthew 17:20, though in a different context.*

¹He said to his disciples, "It is inevitable that causes of stumbling will come, but woe to the one through whom they come. ²It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to stumble. ³Watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴Even if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times turns back to you saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him." ⁵The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" ⁶The Lord said, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. ⁷"Which of you, having a slave who is plowing or tending sheep, would say to him when he comes in from the field, 'Come at once and recline at the table'? ⁸Instead, would he not say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, and dress yourself for service and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that, you may eat and drink'? ⁹Does he thank the slave because he did what was commanded? ¹⁰So you also, when you have done everything you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have only done what was our duty.'" ¹¹While traveling to Jerusalem, Jesus passed along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²As he entered a village, ten men with a skin disease met him. They stood at a distance ¹³They raised up their voices, and stated, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. ¹⁴When he saw them, he said, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. ¹⁵One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶He fell facedown at Jesus's feet, thanking him — and he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷Jesus responded, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸Was no one found to return and give glory to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹Then he said to him, "Get up and go ¹⁹your way. Your faith has saved you." ²⁰When asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus answered them, "The kingdom of God does not come with signs to be observed. ²¹Nor will people say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For the kingdom of God is in your midst." ²²Then he said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. ²³People will say to you, 'Look, there!' or 'Look, here!' Do not go out or chase after them. ²⁴For just as lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day. ²⁵And he rejected of this generation, and but first must he suffer many things. ²⁶Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man. ²⁷They were eating, drinking, marrying, and being given in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸It was the same in the days of Lot: they were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, and building. ²⁹But on the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all. ³

◦It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. ³¹On that day, the one who is on the housetop with his belongings in the house must not go down to get them. Likewise, the one who is in the field must not turn back. ³²Remember what happened to Lot's wife. ³³Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will keep it alive. ³⁴I tell you, on that night two will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. ³⁵Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left. ³⁶Two will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left." ³⁷They asked him, "Where, Lord?" He said to them, "Where the body is, there the vultures will gather."

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The Greek *anendekton* ('impossible not to happen, inevitable') is stronger than a mere prediction — it acknowledges the fallen reality of the world. The word *skandala* ('stumbling blocks, snares') refers to anything that causes someone to fall away from faith, not merely 'offenses' in the modern sense.
2. The *lithos mylikos* ('millstone') refers to the large upper stone of a donkey-driven mill — heavy enough to guarantee drowning. The 'little ones' (*mikrōn*) likely refers to new or vulnerable believers, not only children. The hyperbolic comparison — drowning is preferable to leading others astray — underscores the gravity of spiritual harm.
3. The Greek *prosechete heautois* ('watch yourselves, be on guard!') shifts the focus from the one who causes stumbling to the disciples' own responsibility. The verb *epitimēson* ('rebuke') carries the sense of a corrective confrontation, not mere criticism. The sequence — rebuke, repentance, forgiveness — presents reconciliation as a structured process, not an automatic response.
4. The number 'seven' (*heptakis*) represents completeness and fullness in biblical numerology — the point is not a literal count but an unlimited willingness to forgive. The verb *epistrepsē* ('turns back') carries the same turning/returning imagery as the Hebrew *teshuvah*. The command *aphēseis* ('you will forgive') is a future indicative used as an imperative, making forgiveness not optional but obligatory.
5. This is one of only six times Luke uses the term *apostoloi* ('apostles') rather than *mathētai* ('disciples') during the ministry narrative. Their request reveals that they recognize the demands of verses 3-4 as exceeding their current capacity. The verb *prosthes* ('add to, increase') suggests they view faith as something quantifiable — a misunderstanding Jesus corrects in the next verse.
6. The *sykaminō* ('mulberry tree') is distinct from the *sykomorea* ('sycamore-fig') of 19:4. Luke's version uses a mulberry tree rather than Matthew's mountain (17:20), but the point is identical: the issue is not the quantity of faith but its genuine presence. A mustard seed (*kokkon sinapeōs*) was proverbially the smallest seed known in Palestine. The conditional *ei echete* ('if you had') is a contrary-to-fact condition, implying they do not yet possess even this minimal faith.
7. The Greek *doulos* means 'slave,' not merely 'servant' — the parable depends on the absolute obligation of a slave to his master. The verb *anapese* ('recline') refers to the Greco-Roman dining posture of reclining on a couch, the standard position for meals in Jesus's context.
8. The verb *perizōsamenos* ('having girded yourself') refers to tucking up the outer garment into a belt for active work — a practical preparation for serving. The sequence is clear: the master's needs come first, the slave's needs second. This is not an endorsement of slavery but a parable using a familiar social structure to make a theological point about duty.
9. The expected answer is 'no.' The Greek *charin echei* ('have gratitude toward') implies that obedience to clear commands does not earn special recognition. The KJV's 'I trow not' is an addition — the Greek simply asks the rhetorical question and moves on.
10. The word *achreioi* ('unworthy, useless, unprofitable') is striking — Jesus instructs his followers to consider themselves 'useless' even after full obedience. This counters any theology of merit: complete obedience is the baseline, not an achievement deserving reward. The verb *ōpheilomen* ('we were obligated') frames service as debt, not generosity.
11. The phrase *dia meson Samareias kai Galilaias* ('through the middle of Samaria and Galilee') is geographically unusual — traveling south to Jerusalem, one would pass through Galilee first, then Samaria. 'Along the border between' captures the sense that Jesus was traveling the boundary region where the two territories met, which is the most coherent geographical reading.
12. The Greek *leproi* ('lepers') covers a range of skin conditions beyond what modern medicine calls leprosy (Hansen's disease). Levitical law (Leviticus 13-14) required those with such conditions to remain isolated. Their standing 'at a distance' (*porrōthen*) reflects the social and ritual separation required by the Torah.
12. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Leviticus 13-14. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
13. The title *epistata* ('master, commander') is used exclusively in Luke among the Gospels and always by disciples or those seeking help — it implies recognized authority. Their loud cry from a distance reflects both their desperation and the physical separation their condition imposed.
14. The command to show themselves to the priests follows the Levitical procedure for certifying a healed skin condition (Leviticus 14:1-32). The healing occurs en route — 'as they went' (*en tō hypagein*) — requiring them to act in faith before seeing results. This is the only mass healing of lepers recorded in the Gospels.

14. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Leviticus 14:1-32. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
15. The verb *hypestrepsen* ('turned back, returned') contrasts with the obedient departure of the nine — this one interrupts his journey to the priest in order to give thanks. His loud praise (*phōnēs megalēs*, 'great voice') echoes the loud cry of verse 13, transforming a plea for mercy into a shout of gratitude.
16. Luke delays the revelation that the man is a Samaritēs ('Samaritan') until the end of the verse for dramatic effect. The Samaritans were despised by Jews as religious and ethnic outsiders (cf. John 4:9). The posture — falling on his face at Jesus's feet — is the posture of worship. The verb *eucharistōn* ('giving thanks') is the root of 'Eucharist,' linking gratitude to the deepest form of worship.
17. Jesus's two rhetorical questions expose the ingratitude of the nine — they received healing but did not return to give glory to God. The verb *ekatharisthēsan* ('were cleansed') recalls the Levitical language of ritual purification, connecting physical healing with spiritual restoration.
18. The word *allogenēs* ('foreigner, one of another race') is a loaded term — it was inscribed on the warning stones in the Jerusalem temple prohibiting non-Jews from entering the inner courts. Jesus uses it to highlight the irony: the one deemed unfit for God's temple is the only one who returns to glorify God.
19. The phrase *hē pistis sou sesōken se* ('your faith has saved you') uses *sōzō*, which means both 'to heal' and 'to save.' All ten were cleansed (*katharizō*, v. 14), but only this one is 'saved' (*sōzō*). Luke distinguishes between physical healing (which all ten received) and the deeper salvation that comes through faith and gratitude. This same phrase appears in 7:50 (the sinful woman) and 8:48 (the hemorrhaging woman).
20. The word *paratērēseōs* ('observation, watching') suggests watching for visible, datable signs — the kind of apocalyptic timetable the Pharisees were seeking. Jesus rejects the premise: the kingdom cannot be tracked like a military campaign or astronomical event.
21. The phrase *entos hymōn estin* is one of the most debated in the Gospels. *Entos* can mean 'within' (interior, spiritual) or 'among/in the midst of' (present in the community). Since Jesus is addressing Pharisees hostile to his message, 'within you' seems unlikely as a commendation of their spiritual state. 'In your midst' better captures the idea that the kingdom is present in Jesus's own person and activity, standing right before them whether they recognize it or not. The alternative reading 'within you' is noted for completeness.
22. Jesus shifts from addressing the Pharisees to the disciples. The phrase 'one of the days of the Son of Man' is unusual — it may mean 'even a single day' of the messianic age, suggesting a period of absence or suffering during which the disciples will yearn for his visible presence. The title 'Son of Man' (*huios tou anthrōpou*) draws from Daniel 7:13.
22. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Daniel 7:13. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
23. The warning against following false messianic claims echoes the Pharisees' question in verse 20. The verbs *apelthēte* ('go out') and *diōxēte* ('pursue, chase') suggest an active and potentially dangerous quest that Jesus forbids.
24. The simile of lightning (*astrapē*) makes two points: the Son of Man's coming will be sudden (no time to prepare) and universally visible (no need to search for it). This directly answers both the Pharisees' question about timing and the warning against localized messianic claims. Some manuscripts omit 'in his day' (*en tē hēmera autou*), but the SBLGNT retains it.
25. The word *dei* ('it is necessary, must') indicates divine necessity — the suffering is not accidental but part of God's plan. The verb *apodokimasthēnai* ('to be rejected after examination') implies a deliberate evaluation and verdict: this generation examines Jesus and officially declares him unfit. This passion prediction interrupts the eschatological discourse to anchor future glory in present suffering.
26. The comparison to Noah's days (Genesis 6-7) emphasizes not the wickedness of that generation but their obliviousness — they were living normally, unaware of impending judgment. The Greek *Nōe* is the Septuagint spelling of the Hebrew Noah.
26. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 6-7. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
27. The four imperfect verbs (*ēsthion*, *epinon*, *egamoun*, *egamizonto*) describe ongoing, routine activities — the emphasis is on normalcy, not depravity. The shift to the aorist 'came' (*ēlthen*) and 'destroyed' (*apōlesen*) marks the sudden, decisive interruption of judgment. The *kibōton* ('ark, chest') is the same word used for the ark of the covenant in the Septuagint.
28. The Lot comparison (unique to Luke's version) adds commercial and agricultural activities to the list — buying, selling, planting, building. These are not sinful activities but routine preoccupations that blinded people to coming judgment. Six imperfect verbs create a rhythm of uninterrupted normalcy.
29. The reference is to Genesis 19:24-25. The Greek *theion* ('sulfur, brimstone') combined with fire from heaven represents total divine judgment. As with Noah, the transition from imperfect (routine activity) to aorist (sudden destruction) is abrupt and decisive.
29. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Genesis 19:24-25. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
30. The verb *apokalyptetai* ('is revealed') is a present tense used for future certainty. The passive voice implies that God is the one doing the revealing — the Son of Man does not simply appear but is unveiled by divine action. This is the theological climax of the Noah-Lot comparison.

31. The flat rooftops of Palestinian houses were used as living and working spaces, accessed by an external staircase. The instruction not to go back inside emphasizes the urgency and suddenness of the coming judgment. The parallel with Lot's escape (Genesis 19:17, 'Do not look back') is explicit.
31. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Genesis 19:17. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
32. The shortest verse in this discourse — three words in Greek (mnēmoneuete tēs gynaikos Lōt). Lot's wife looked back at Sodom and became a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:26). She serves as the paradigmatic example of attachment to what is being left behind. The imperative 'remember' (mnēmoneuete) is plural, addressed to all disciples.
32. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 19:26. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
33. The Greek psychē means both 'life' and 'soul,' creating a deliberate double meaning. The verb peripoiēsasthai ('to preserve, to acquire for oneself') suggests self-protective hoarding. The contrasting verb zōgonēsei ('will give life to, will keep alive') is vivid — it means to generate life, to bring to life. The paradox: grasping at life kills it; releasing it generates it.
34. The Greek does not specify 'men' — the masculine form is generic, and the reference to sharing a bed could apply to any two people in a household. The verbs paralēmphthēsetai ('will be taken') and aphethēsetai ('will be left') are both passive — the agent of separation is not specified, leaving the meaning deliberately open: taken in judgment or taken in rescue? The text does not resolve this.
35. The participle alēthousai ('grinding') is feminine, so 'women' is explicit in the Greek here. Grinding grain with a hand mill was a daily domestic task typically done by women. The imagery pairs with the previous verse: whether in rest (bed) or work (grinding), the separation is sudden and total.
36. This verse is absent from many early manuscripts and is likely assimilated from Matthew 24:40. The SBLGNT includes it in brackets. We include it here following the SBLGNT text but note its disputed status. The pattern of three pairs (bed, mill, field) creates a comprehensive picture: judgment reaches into every sphere of life.
37. The Greek aetoi can mean either 'eagles' or 'vultures.' Since eagles do not typically feed on carrion while vultures do, and the saying describes gathering around a corpse (sōma, 'body'), 'vultures' is the more accurate zoological rendering. The proverb is enigmatic — it may mean that judgment, like vultures, finds its target inevitably, or that the signs of the end will be as unmistakable as vultures circling over death. Jesus answers the 'where' question with a riddle rather than a map coordinate.

18

Summary: Luke 18 opens with two parables on prayer — the persistent widow and the unjust judge, followed by the Pharisee and the tax collector — then moves through Jesus's teaching on children and the kingdom, the encounter with the rich ruler, a third passion prediction, and the healing of a blind man near Jericho. The chapter traces a thematic arc from persistent, humble prayer to radical surrender of wealth and status, culminating in faith-driven healing.

What Makes This Remarkable: The parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (unique to Luke) is a masterclass in reversal: the righteous man leaves unjustified while the sinner goes home right with God. The rich ruler episode reveals that salvation is 'impossible' for humans but 'possible with God' — a statement that redefines the entire framework of religious achievement. Peter's question about the disciples' own sacrifice and Jesus's response promise both present-age restoration and eternal life.

Translation Friction: The phrase 'justified rather than the other' (v. 14) uses dikaiōtheis in a way that anticipates Pauline theology — we render it without importing later theological systems. The 'camel through the eye of a needle' (v. 25) is rendered literally; we do not adopt the later medieval legend about a small gate called 'The Needle's Eye,' as there is no historical evidence for it.

Connections: The persistent widow connects to the eschatological discourse of chapter 17 — God will vindicate his elect. The Pharisee-tax collector parable connects to Luke's programmatic concern with reversal (1:52-53, 14:11, 16:15). The rich ruler parallels Mark 10:17-31 and Matthew 19:16-30. The blind man's healing (paralleling Mark 10:46-52) serves as the final healing miracle before the Jerusalem entry.

¹Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not give up, ²Declaring, There was in a city a pass judgment on, which feared not God, neither regarded man. ³There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' ⁴For a time he refused. But afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God or respect anyone, ⁵Yet because this widow troubles me, I will give justice to her, so that not by her continual

coming she wear out me. ⁶And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷Will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸I tell you, he will bring about justice for them quickly. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" ⁹He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and looked down on everyone else: ¹⁰"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people — swindlers, the unjust, adulterers — or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of everything I acquire.' ¹³But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift his eyes toward heaven, but beat his chest, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴I tell you, this man went home justified rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted." ¹⁵People were also bringing infants to him so that he might touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. ¹⁶But Jesus called them to himself, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." ¹⁸A certain ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ²⁰You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not bear false witness, honor your father and mother.'" ²¹He said, "I have kept all these since my youth." ²²When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." ²³When he heard this, he became deeply grieved, because he was extremely wealthy. ²⁴Jesus, seeing his grief, said, "How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." ²⁶Those who heard this said, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷He said, "What is impossible with people is possible with God." ²⁸Peter said, "Look, we have left what we had and followed you." ²⁹He said to them, "Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God ³⁰Indeed, who will not accept manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting. ³¹Taking the Twelve aside, he said to them, "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. ³²For he will be handed over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon. ³³After flogging him, they will kill him. And on the third day he will rise." ³⁴But the disciples understood none of this. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was being said. ³⁵As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting beside the road, begging. ³⁶Hearing a crowd passing by, he asked what was happening. ³⁷They told him, "Jesus the Nazarene is passing by." ³⁸He called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" ³⁹Those in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁰Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, ⁴¹"What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me see again." ⁴²Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight. Your faith has saved you." ⁴³Gave praise to god, immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God — and all the people, when they saw it.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. Luke provides the interpretive key before the parable itself — an unusual technique. The verb *enkakein* ('to lose heart, to give up, to grow weary') suggests the temptation to stop praying when answers are delayed. The infinitive *dein* ('it is necessary') frames persistent prayer as a divine requirement, not merely a recommendation.
2. The judge is characterized by two negatives: no fear of God (the vertical relationship) and no respect for people (the horizontal relationship). The verb *entropomenos* ('regarding, respecting, having shame before') implies a complete absence of social conscience. This is not a model of God but a foil — if even this judge eventually responds, how much more will a just God?
3. The imperfect *ērchetō* ('she kept coming') indicates repeated, persistent visits — not a single request. The verb *ekdikēson* ('vindicate, grant justice to') does not mean 'avenge' in the modern sense of retaliation but rather 'render a just verdict.' A widow in the ancient world had no male advocate and was legally vulnerable — her persistence was her only leverage.
4. The phrase *eipi chronon* ('for a time') indicates a significant delay, not a brief pause. The judge's internal monologue (*eipen en heautō*, 'said within himself') reveals that his eventual action is motivated entirely by self-interest, not justice — making the a fortiori argument of verses 6-8 even more powerful.

5. The verb hypopiazē ('wear out, strike under the eye, give a black eye') is a boxing metaphor — the judge fears the widow will figuratively beat him into submission. The coarse humor is deliberate: a powerful judge is being pummeled by a powerless widow's persistence. The word kopon ('trouble, weariness') reinforces that her persistence is her only weapon.
6. Luke calls Jesus 'the Lord' (ho kyrios), his characteristic title for Jesus in the narrative framework. The phrase ho kritēs tēs adikias ('the judge of unrighteousness') is a Semitic genitive construction meaning 'the unrighteous judge.' Jesus draws attention to the judge's own words as the basis for the argument from lesser to greater.
7. The phrase eklektōn autou ('his chosen ones, his elect') carries covenantal weight — these are people God has specifically chosen and bound himself to. The verb makrothymeī ('is patient, delays') is ambiguous: is God patient with the elect (sustaining them during the wait) or patient regarding their enemies (delaying judgment)? We render as a second rhetorical question to preserve the ambiguity.
8. The phrase en tachei ('quickly, speedily, without delay') creates a tension with the parable's emphasis on prolonged waiting — 'quickly' is from God's perspective, not the petitioner's. The final question (ara heurēsei tēn pistin, 'will he indeed find the faith?') is haunting and unanswered. The article tēn before pistin ('the faith') may specify the kind of faith described in this parable — persistent, trusting prayer. Jesus leaves the question open, challenging the listener.
9. Luke again provides the interpretive key before the parable. The perfect participle pepoithotas ('having trusted, being confident') indicates a settled, ongoing self-assurance. The verb exouthenountas ('despising, treating as nothing') is strong — it means to regard others as utterly worthless. The combination of self-righteousness and contempt for others is the target of what follows.
10. The verb anebēsan ('went up') reflects Jerusalem's topography — the temple was on the highest point. The pairing of a Pharisee (the religious elite, known for scrupulous Torah observance) with a telōnēs ('tax collector,' despised as a collaborator with Rome and assumed to be corrupt) creates the maximum possible social and moral contrast for a Jewish audience.
11. The phrase pros heauton ('to himself' or 'about himself') is ambiguous — it could mean he prayed silently or that his prayer was self-directed rather than God-directed. His prayer is technically a thanksgiving (eucharisteō) but functions as self-congratulation. Every comparison is negative: he defines himself by what he is not rather than by who God is. The climactic 'or even like this tax collector' (ē kai hōs houtos ho telōnēs) drips with contempt — he has noticed the man and judged him.
12. The Torah required fasting only on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29-31). Fasting twice weekly (Monday and Thursday, the traditional days) was a voluntary Pharisaic practice that exceeded the law's requirements. Similarly, tithing 'everything I acquire' (panta hosa ktōmai) goes beyond the Torah's agricultural tithe — he tithes even purchased goods, in case the seller had not tithed. His claims are probably truthful, which makes the parable's verdict all the more startling.
12. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Leviticus 16:29-31. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
13. Every detail contrasts with the Pharisee: the tax collector stands 'far off' (makrothen) rather than prominently, refuses to raise his eyes (the normal posture of prayer), and beats his chest (etypen to stēthos, a gesture of grief and self-condemnation). The verb hilasthēti ('be merciful, be propitiated') is related to hilastērion ('mercy seat, place of atonement') — he is essentially asking God to do for him what the Day of Atonement sacrifice does: to cover his sin. The article tō hamartōlō ('the sinner') is significant — he does not say 'a sinner' but 'the sinner,' as though he is the only one.
14. The perfect participle dedikaiōmenos ('having been justified, declared righteous') is a divine passive — God is the one who justifies. This is startling: the tax collector, who offered nothing but confession, leaves in right standing with God, while the Pharisee, who exceeded every requirement, does not. The concluding proverb (repeated from 14:11) is Luke's signature reversal theme. The verb katebē ('went down') contrasts with anebēsan ('went up') in verse 10 — the physical descent from the temple mirrors the spiritual descent of humility.
15. Luke uses brephē ('infants, babies') rather than Mark's paidia ('children'), emphasizing that these were very young — too young to come on their own. The verb haptētai ('to touch') implies a blessing through physical contact. The disciples' rebuke (epetimōn) uses the same word used for rebuking demons and storms, suggesting they viewed the interruption as inappropriate and beneath Jesus's dignity.
16. Jesus shifts from brephē ('infants') to paidia ('children') — a broader term that includes the infants but extends the principle. The present imperative with mē (mē kōlyete, 'stop hindering') implies the disciples are currently doing something that must cease. The phrase tōn toioutōn ('of such as these, to such ones') clarifies that the kingdom belongs not to children per se but to those who share their characteristics — dependence, receptivity, lack of status.
17. The double negative ou mē ('never, by no means') is the strongest form of negation in Greek — there are no exceptions. The comparison 'like a child' (hōs paidion) is about how one receives, not about innocence or purity. Children in the ancient world had no legal standing, no achievements to present, no leverage — they could only receive what was given. This connects directly to the Pharisee-tax collector parable: the one who receives God's mercy without presenting credentials is the one who enters.
18. Luke identifies the man as an archōn ('ruler, official') — Matthew calls him 'young' (neaniskos) and Mark simply 'a man.' The title 'Good Teacher' (didaskale agathe) is unusual and becomes the basis for Jesus's response. The question itself contains a tension: 'inherit' (klēronomēsō) implies receiving a gift, while 'what must I do' (ti poiēsas) implies earning it.

19. Jesus's response does not deny his own goodness but challenges the ruler's casual use of the term. The statement 'No one is good except God alone' (oudeis agathos ei mē heis ho theos) establishes an absolute standard that will prove relevant: if only God is truly good, then human moral achievement alone cannot secure eternal life. The implicit question is whether the ruler understands the full weight of calling someone 'good.'
20. Jesus cites five of the Ten Commandments — all from the second table (duties toward other people) — but conspicuously omits the tenth: 'You shall not covet.' Given the story's outcome, this omission may be deliberate. The order differs from the Hebrew Bible (Exodus 20) but follows the Septuagint order in some manuscripts (Deuteronomy 5:17-18 LXX places adultery before murder).
20. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 20 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
20. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Deuteronomy 5:17-18 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
21. The verb ephylaxa ('I have guarded, kept, observed') implies careful, watchful obedience. The phrase ek neotētos ('from youth') refers to the age of accountability (around twelve or thirteen in Jewish practice). Jesus does not dispute his claim — this man may genuinely have lived an outwardly commandment-keeping life. The problem lies elsewhere.
22. The phrase eti hen soi leipei ('one thing still remains lacking for you') pierces through the ruler's self-assessment. The command is fourfold: sell (pōlēson), distribute (diados), come (deuro), follow (akolouthēi). Luke's version specifies 'everything' (panta hosa echeis) and 'distribute to the poor' (diados ptōchois), making the demand as radical as possible. The promise of 'treasure in heaven' (thēsaurōn en tois ouranois) reframes wealth: true riches are stored elsewhere.
23. The adjective perilypos ('deeply grieved, exceedingly sorrowful') is the same word used of Jesus in Gethsemane (Mark 14:34). Luke adds sphodra ('exceedingly, extremely') to plousios ('rich'), emphasizing the magnitude of what is being asked. The man's sorrow confirms both his genuine desire and his inability to pay the cost. Luke does not record him leaving — a subtle openness that Mark's account resolves more definitively (Mark 10:22).
24. The adverb dyskolōs ('with difficulty, hardly') is the key word — entering the kingdom is not impossible for the wealthy (as verse 27 will clarify) but extremely difficult. The phrase ta chrēmata echontes ('those having possessions') describes not merely the rich but those who hold onto their possessions as defining possessions.
25. The image is deliberately absurd — a kamēlon ('camel'), the largest animal in Palestine, through a trēmato belonēs ('eye of a needle'), the smallest opening. There is no historical evidence for a medieval legend about a small gate called 'The Needle's Eye' in Jerusalem. Some manuscripts read kamilon ('rope') instead of kamēlon ('camel'), which would create a more logical comparison (rope through needle), but the harder reading (camel) is almost certainly original. The hyperbole underscores the impossibility of wealth-based entry into the kingdom.
26. The question reveals the audience's assumption: if the wealthy — who were commonly viewed as blessed by God — cannot enter the kingdom, then salvation seems impossible for anyone. The verb sōthēnai ('to be saved') broadens the discussion from kingdom entry to salvation itself. Their shock is genuine and theologically significant.
27. This is the theological center of the passage. The adjective adynata ('impossible things') is unqualified — Jesus does not soften it to 'difficult.' Human effort cannot achieve salvation; only divine power can accomplish it. This echoes the angel's word to Mary in 1:37: 'Nothing will be impossible with God' (ouk adynatēsei para tou theou pan rhēma).
28. Peter's statement is an implicit question: if the rich ruler failed to give up everything, what about those who did? The phrase ta idia ('our own things, what belonged to us') is more modest than Mark's panta ('everything') — Luke's Peter does not claim to have left 'everything' but rather 'what was ours.' The aorist verbs aphentes ('having left') and ēkolouthēsamen ('we followed') present the decision as completed and definitive.
29. Luke's list of what might be left behind includes 'wife' (gynaika), which is unique among the Synoptic parallels and provocative — it does not necessarily advocate abandoning a spouse but recognizes that discipleship may require separation (cf. 14:26). The phrase heneken tēs basileias tou theou ('for the sake of the kingdom of God') replaces Mark's 'for my sake and the gospel's,' focusing on the kingdom rather than Jesus personally.
30. The promise is twofold: pollaplasiona ('many times more, manifold') in this present age (en tō kairō toutō), plus eternal life (zōēn aiōnion) in the age to come. Luke omits Mark's specification of 'houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and fields' as well as 'with persecutions,' offering a more streamlined promise. The two-age framework (this age/the coming age) reflects standard Jewish eschatology.
31. This is Jesus's third and most detailed passion prediction in Luke (cf. 9:22, 9:44). The phrase telesthēsetai panta ta gegrammena ('everything written will be completed/fulfilled') frames the passion as the fulfillment of scripture, not a tragic accident. Luke's version uniquely emphasizes prophetic fulfillment — Mark and Matthew focus more on the events themselves.
32. The sequence of passive verbs (paradothēsetai, empaichthēsetai, hybristhēsetai, emptysthēsetai) creates a crescendo of humiliation. The 'Gentiles' (ethnesin) refers to the Roman authorities — Jesus specifies that his death will involve both Jewish and Roman agency. The verb hybristhēsetai ('to be treated with hubris, outrageously mistreated') implies deliberate degradation.
33. The verb mastigōsantes ('having flogged') refers to the Roman flagellum — a whip with embedded bone and metal that tore flesh. The prediction moves from humiliation through death to resurrection in a single sentence. The phrase tē hēmera tē tritē ('on the third day') is the standard early Christian formula for the resurrection (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:4).
34. Luke's threefold emphasis on incomprehension is unique and emphatic: they did not understand (synēkan), the meaning was hidden (kekrymmenon) from them, and they did not know (eginōskon) what was said. The passive kekrymmenon ('having been hidden') suggests divine

concealment — God deliberately veiled the meaning until after the resurrection (cf. 24:45, where the risen Jesus 'opens their minds'). This is not merely intellectual failure but a divinely imposed limitation.

35. Luke places the healing as Jesus approaches Jericho, while Mark 10:46 places it as Jesus leaves Jericho — a well-known discrepancy. Various harmonizations have been proposed (two Jerichos, two healings), but we render Luke's text as written. Mark names the man Bartimaeus; Luke does not. The blind beggar sat beside the road (para tēn hodon), the only location where a beggar could access passing travelers.
36. The imperfect epythnato ('he was asking, he kept asking') suggests repeated inquiry — the blind man could hear but not see the commotion and persistently sought information. The optative eiē ('might be') indicates indirect discourse in a formal literary style characteristic of Luke.
37. The designation Nazōraios ('Nazarene') identifies Jesus by his hometown of Nazareth. The present tense parerchetai ('is passing by') conveys immediacy — the opportunity is now and will not last. The crowd serves as intermediary between the blind man and Jesus.
38. The title 'Son of David' (huie Daid) is a messianic title — the blind man confesses Jesus as the expected Davidic Messiah. This is remarkable: a blind beggar sees what the disciples cannot (v. 34). The plea eleēson me ('have mercy on me') uses the same verb as the tax collector's prayer in 18:13, connecting the two stories thematically.
39. As with the parents bringing children (v. 15), the crowd tries to prevent access to Jesus, and as with the persistent widow (vv. 1-8), refusal only intensifies the plea. The imperfect ekrazen ('he kept crying out') paired with pollō mallon ('much more, all the more') shows an escalation — he refuses to be silenced. His persistence mirrors the parable that opened this chapter.
40. The verb statheis ('having stood still, having stopped') is significant — Jesus halts his journey to Jerusalem for this one man. The verb ekeleusen ('commanded, ordered') shows authority — Jesus directs the same crowd that tried to silence the man to now bring him forward. The question that follows (v. 41) is not for information but for the man's own confession of need.
41. Jesus asks the same question he implicitly asked the rich ruler — 'What do you want?' The blind man's answer is direct and humble: anablepsō ('to see again, to look up') implies he was not born blind but had lost his sight. His address kyrie ('Lord') may be simple respect ('sir') or a deeper confession, given his use of 'Son of David' earlier.
42. The imperative anablepson ('see again!') is a command, not a prayer — Jesus speaks healing into existence with a word. The phrase hē pistis sou sesōken se ('your faith has saved you') is identical to 17:19 (the grateful leper), again using sōzō to indicate that physical healing and spiritual salvation are bound together. The blind man's faith was demonstrated in his persistent refusal to be silenced.
43. The adverb parachrēma ('immediately, at once') is a Lukan favorite for emphasizing the instantaneous nature of divine action. The healed man ekolouthēi ('was following') Jesus — the imperfect tense suggests ongoing discipleship, not a one-time response. Unlike the rich ruler who went away grieving, the blind man follows. The chapter ends with communal praise (pas ho laos, 'all the people'), a characteristic Lukan conclusion that frames the miracle as a public revelation of God's power.

19

Summary: *Luke 19 narrates Zacchaeus's conversion in Jericho, the parable of the ten minas (pounds), Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, his weeping over the city, and the cleansing of the temple. The chapter marks the decisive transition from the travel narrative (9:51-19:27) to Jesus's Jerusalem ministry. Themes of wealth, repentance, judgment, and kingship converge as Jesus enters his final week.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The Zacchaeus story (unique to Luke) is the counterexample to the rich ruler of chapter 18 — another wealthy man who, unlike the ruler, actually surrenders his wealth and receives salvation. The parable of the minas differs from Matthew's parable of the talents (25:14-30) in key details: the nobleman goes to 'receive a kingdom,' and his citizens send a delegation rejecting his rule — likely an allusion to Archelaus's contested succession in 4 BC, an event the original audience would have recognized. Jesus's weeping over Jerusalem (unique to Luke) is one of only two recorded instances of Jesus weeping, the other being at Lazarus's tomb (John 11:35).*

Translation Friction: *The parable of the minas and Matthew's parable of the talents share significant overlap but differ enough to be treated as separate traditions. We render Luke's version on its own terms without harmonizing. The 'cleansing of the temple' is placed differently in John (2:13-22); we follow Luke's chronology. The phrase 'today salvation has come to this house' (v. 9) is rendered without importing later systematic theology about the mechanism of salvation.*

Connections: Zacchaeus connects to the theme of tax collectors throughout Luke (3:12, 5:27-32, 7:29, 15:1, 18:10-14). The parable of the minas echoes the parable of the talents (Matthew 25) but with distinctive political overtones. The triumphal entry fulfills Zechariah 9:9 (though Luke does not quote it explicitly, unlike Matthew 21:5). Jesus's weeping connects to the prophetic lament tradition (Jeremiah 8:18-9:1). The temple cleansing quotes Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11.

¹Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. ²A man was there named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. ³He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he could not because of the crowd, since he was short in stature. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore-fig tree to see him, because Jesus was about to pass that way. ⁵When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." ⁶He hurried down and welcomed Jesus joyfully. ⁷When the people saw this, they all grumbled, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." ⁸But Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I am giving half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone of anything, I am paying back four times as much." ⁹Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." ¹¹While they were listening to this, he went on to tell a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and they supposed that the kingdom of God was about to appear immediately. ¹²He said, "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself and then return. ¹³He called ten of his slaves and gave them ten minas, saying, 'Conduct business with this until I come back.' ¹⁴But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to rule over us.' ¹⁵When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered the slaves to whom he had given the money to be called to him so that he could find out what they had earned by conducting business. ¹⁶The first came forward, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas more.' ¹⁷He said to him, 'Well done, good slave! Because you have been faithful in a very small matter, you shall have authority over ten cities.' ¹⁸The second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has produced five minas.' ¹⁹He said to this one also, 'You shall be over five cities.' ²⁰Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina. I kept it stored away in a cloth. ²¹For I was afraid of you, because you are a harsh man. You take out what you did not put in, and reap what you did not sow.' ²²He said to him, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked slave! You knew that I am a harsh man, taking out what I did not put in and reaping what I did not sow? ²³Then why did you not put my money in the bank? At least when I returned, I could have collected it with interest.' ²⁴Then he said to those standing by, 'Take the mina from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.' ²⁵They said to him, 'Master, he already has ten minas!' ²⁶'I tell you, to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. ²⁷But as for these enemies of mine who did not want me to rule over them — bring them here and slaughter them in front of me.'" ²⁸After saying this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹As he approached Bethphage and Bethany, near the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰Declaring, Go you into the village over opposed to you. In the which at your entering you will find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat — loose him, and bring him hither. ³¹If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you are to say, 'The Lord has need of it.'" ³²Those who were sent went and found everything just as he had told them. ³³As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" ³⁴They said, "The Lord has need of it." ³⁵They brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they put Jesus on it. ³⁶As he rode along, people spread their cloaks on the road. ³⁷As he was now approaching the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, ³⁸Declaring, Blessed be the King that comes by the authority of the Lord — peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. ³⁹Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." ⁴⁰He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would cry out." ⁴¹As he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴²Declaring, If you hadst known, even you, at least in this your day, the things which belong to your peace! but now they are hid from your eyes. ⁴³For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and surround you and hem you in on every side. ⁴⁴They will dash you to the ground — you and your children within you. They will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation." ⁴⁵Then he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling, ⁴⁶Declaring to them, It is written, My home is the home of petition — but you have made it a den of thieves. ⁴⁷He was teaching daily in

the temple. The chief priests, the scribes, and the leading men of the people were seeking to destroy him, ⁴⁸Could not find what they might do — for all the people were very eager to listen to him.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The imperfect *diērcheto* ('was passing through') suggests Jesus intended to travel through Jericho without stopping — the encounter with Zacchaeus will interrupt his transit. Jericho was a prosperous city near the Jordan River, a major customs and taxation center on the trade route from the east.
2. The name *Zakchaios* is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Zakkai* ('pure, innocent, righteous') — an ironic name for a man whose profession made him ritually and socially impure. The title *architelōnēs* ('chief tax collector') appears only here in the New Testament and indicates he supervised other tax collectors in the Jericho district, profiting from their collections. The detail 'he was wealthy' (*autos plousios*) immediately connects him to the rich ruler of 18:18-23.
3. The imperfect *ežētei* ('he was seeking, he kept trying') indicates persistent effort. The phrase *tē hēlikia mikros* ('small in stature/height') is stated without judgment — Luke simply explains the physical obstacle. The detail is practical: the crowd would not have made way for a despised tax collector, so his short stature compounded his social exclusion.
4. The verb *prodramōn* ('having run ahead') shows undignified haste — a wealthy man running was socially inappropriate in the ancient Near East (cf. the father in 15:20). The *sykomorea* ('sycamore-fig') is a distinct species from the *sykaminō* ('mulberry') of 17:6 — it has a short trunk with wide, low branches, making it easy to climb. Luke specifies that Jesus was going to pass by that exact spot, setting up the 'chance' encounter that is anything but accidental.
5. Jesus calls Zacchaeus by name — unexplained by the narrative, suggesting either prior knowledge or supernatural perception. The verb *dei* ('it is necessary, I must') indicates divine compulsion, the same word used for the necessity of the passion (9:22, 18:31). The word *sēmeron* ('today') is a theologically loaded term in Luke, always marking the present moment of salvation (2:11, 4:21, 23:43). Jesus does not ask permission but announces his intention.
6. Zacchaeus's response mirrors Jesus's urgency: *speusas* ('having hurried') echoes Jesus's *speusas* in verse 5. The verb *hypedexato* ('welcomed, received as a guest') implies formal hospitality. The participle *chairōn* ('rejoicing') shows that the encounter is received as gift, not imposition. The contrast with the rich ruler's grief (18:23) is stark — same demand for radical surrender, opposite emotional response.
7. The verb *diegongyzon* ('they were grumbling, murmuring') echoes Israel's wilderness complaints and is a recurring response to Jesus's association with sinners in Luke (5:30, 15:2). The word *pantes* ('all') indicates universal disapproval — not just Pharisees but the entire crowd. The verb *katalysai* ('to find lodging, to be a guest') means Jesus accepted the full hospitality of the house, sharing table and shelter with a 'sinner' (*hamartōlō*).
8. The verb *statheis* ('having stood') indicates a formal, public declaration. The present tense *didōmi* ('I am giving') and *apodidōmi* ('I am paying back') may indicate a new resolution or may describe an existing practice — the Greek is ambiguous. The fourfold restitution (*tetraploun*) exceeds the Torah's requirement (Numbers 5:7 requires the principal plus one-fifth) and matches the penalty for stealing and slaughtering a sheep (Exodus 22:1). The verb *esykophantēsa* ('extorted, defrauded') is the same word used for the soldiers' question in 3:14.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Numbers 5:7 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Exodus 22:1 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
9. The word *sēmeron* ('today') echoes verse 5 and is the fulfillment of the divine necessity announced there. 'Salvation' (*sōtēria*) comes to the 'house' (*oikō*) — extending beyond Zacchaeus to his entire household. The phrase 'son of Abraham' (*huios Abraam*) reclaims Zacchaeus's identity: despite his profession and reputation, he belongs to the covenant people. Jesus does not say Zacchaeus has become a son of Abraham but that he is one — his covenant identity was never lost, only obscured.
10. This verse functions as a mission statement for Jesus in Luke's Gospel, summarizing the theology of chapter 15 (the lost sheep, lost coin, lost son) in a single sentence. The two infinitives *zētēsai* ('to seek') and *sōsai* ('to save') present Jesus as active searcher, not passive recipient — he goes to the lost, not the other way around. The neuter participle *to apolōlos* ('the lost thing, that which has been destroyed') encompasses anyone in the state of lostness. This verse directly answers the crowd's grumbling in verse 7.
11. Luke explicitly states the parable's purpose: to correct the expectation that the kingdom would arrive instantly (*parachrēma*, 'immediately') upon Jesus's entry into Jerusalem. The proximity to Jerusalem (*engys einai Ierusalēm*) and the crowd's eschatological excitement provide the interpretive context. The verb *anaphainesthai* ('to appear, to be revealed') suggests they expected a dramatic, visible manifestation of God's rule.
12. The scenario closely mirrors the historical precedent of Archelaus, son of Herod the Great, who traveled to Rome in 4 BC to receive confirmation of his kingship from Augustus. The Jericho audience would have recognized the allusion immediately, as Herod had built a winter palace near Jericho. The verb *hypostrepsai* ('to return') foreshadows the return of the Son of Man.
13. A *mna* ('mina') was a Greek unit of currency worth about 100 denarii — roughly three to four months' wages for a laborer. Unlike Matthew's parable of the talents (where different amounts are given to different servants), here each slave receives one mina each, making the different outcomes purely a matter of effort and skill. The verb *pragmateusasthe* ('do business, trade, conduct commerce') is a clear commercial term.

14. This detail is unique to Luke's parable and has no parallel in Matthew's version. Historically, a Jewish delegation of fifty traveled to Rome to oppose Archelaus's appointment (Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.11.1). In the parable, the citizens (*politai*, those who owe civic allegiance) represent those who reject the nobleman's — and by extension, Jesus's — kingship. The verb *basileuein* ('to rule as king') makes the political and theological stakes explicit.
15. The nobleman returns with the kingdom secured — his authority is now confirmed. The verb *diepragmateusanto* ('they had gained by trading') is a compound form of the commercial verb from verse 13. The accounting scene represents final judgment: the absent king returns and demands an account.
16. A tenfold return (1,000 percent) represents extraordinary stewardship. The slave attributes the success to 'your mina' (*hē mna sou*), acknowledging that the capital belonged to the master. The address *kyrie* ('master, lord') maintains the master-slave relationship.
17. The exclamation *euge* ('well done, excellent') is rare in the New Testament. The phrase *en elachistō* ('in a very small thing') is startling — a mina was not an insignificant sum, yet compared to ruling ten cities it is tiny. The principle: faithfulness with small trust leads to responsibility over much greater things. The reward is authority (*exousian*), not rest — kingdom service expands rather than ends.
18. A fivefold return is still excellent, though less than the first slave's tenfold. The verb *epoiēsen* ('made, produced') differs from the first slave's *prosērgasato* ('earned in addition'), perhaps reflecting a slight narrative variation without theological significance.
19. The reward is proportional: ten minas earned yields authority over ten cities; five minas earned yields five cities. This proportionality distinguishes Luke's parable from Matthew's, where both the five-talent and two-talent servants receive the same commendation. The brevity of the response — no 'well done' or 'good slave' — may reflect the proportional nature of the reward.
20. The *soudarion* ('cloth, face-cloth, handkerchief') was a small piece of fabric — storing money in it rather than investing it represents the deliberate choice to do nothing. The slave returns exactly what was given, with no increase. The verb *apokeimenēn* ('stored away, laid aside') suggests hiding rather than protecting.
21. The adjective *austēros* ('harsh, strict, exacting') is the slave's characterization of the master, not the narrator's. The accusations — taking what he did not deposit and reaping what he did not sow — portray the master as exploitative. Whether this reflects the slave's genuine perception or a self-serving excuse is left to the reader. In the parabolic context, it represents a distorted view of God that produces paralysis rather than faithful action.
22. The master turns the slave's own characterization against him: 'Out of your own mouth' (*ek tou stomatos sou*) means 'by your own testimony.' The address *ponēre doule* ('wicked slave') contrasts sharply with 'good slave' (*agathe doule*) in verse 17. The master does not deny being *austēros* but uses the slave's own assessment to condemn his inaction: if you believed I was demanding, you should have been more motivated, not less.
23. The *trapezan* ('table, bank') refers to a money-changer's table where deposits could earn interest (*tokos*, 'interest, offspring'). Even the minimal action of depositing the money would have produced some return. The Torah prohibited charging interest to fellow Israelites (Deuteronomy 23:19-20) but allowed it with foreigners — Jesus uses banking as a parabolic illustration, not an endorsement of lending practices.
23. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Deuteronomy 23:19-20 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
24. The redistribution is counterintuitive: the mina goes to the one who already has the most, not to the one with five. The 'those standing by' (*tois parestōsin*) are courtiers or attendants, emphasizing the king's authority to command. The principle of compounding faithfulness — more is given to those who have used what they were given — is made explicit in the next verse.
25. This interjection by the bystanders (or possibly the other slaves) expresses surprise at what seems unfair — giving more to the one who has the most. The protest highlights the counterintuitive logic of the kingdom, which defies human expectations of equal distribution.
26. This saying appears in multiple contexts across the Gospels (Matthew 13:12, 25:29; Mark 4:25), always articulating the same principle: faithfulness increases capacity while unfaithfulness diminishes it. 'The one who has' refers not to material wealth but to productive use of what has been entrusted. The passive verbs (*dothēsetai*, *arthēsetai*) are divine passives — God is the agent of both giving and taking.
27. This is the most violent conclusion to any of Jesus's parables. The verb *kataspaxate* ('slaughter, butcher') is graphic — it was used for killing sacrificial animals. Historically, Archelaus did execute his opponents upon receiving his kingdom. Within the parable, this represents the fate of those who actively oppose the king's rule (v. 14). Whether this maps directly onto eschatological judgment or functions as a warning within the parabolic world is a matter of interpretation. We render the Greek as stated.
28. The imperfect *eporeueto* ('he was going') resumes the travel narrative, and *anabainōn* ('going up') reflects Jerusalem's elevation — all roads to Jerusalem ascend. The phrase 'went on ahead' (*emprosthen*) shows Jesus leading, with the crowd and disciples following. The transition from parable to narrative is abrupt: the warning about rejected kingship gives way to the very journey that will lead to its fulfillment.
29. Bethphage ('house of unripe figs') and Bethany ('house of affliction' or 'house of dates') were villages on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives (to *oros* to *kaloumenon Elaiōn*) held eschatological significance: Zechariah 14:4 prophesied that the LORD would stand on it in the last days. Jesus's approach from this direction is symbolically charged.
29. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Zechariah 14:4. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.

30. The pōlon ('colt, young animal') in Luke is not specified as a donkey's colt (Matthew and John make this explicit). The detail that no one had ever sat on it (oudeis pōpote anthrōpōn ekathisen) indicates a ritually unused animal — in the Old Testament, animals dedicated to sacred purposes were to be unworked (Numbers 19:2, Deuteronomy 21:3, 1 Samuel 6:7). Jesus's foreknowledge of the colt's presence and status is either prophetic or pre-arranged.
30. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Numbers 19:2 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
30. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Deuteronomy 21:3 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
30. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 1 Samuel 6:7 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
31. The phrase ho kyrios autou chreian echei ('the Lord has need of it') is ambiguous: kyrios could mean 'the Lord' (Jesus, making a divine claim), 'the master' (the colt's owner, who has authorized the borrowing), or 'its owner' (explaining the action). In context, 'the Lord' as a reference to Jesus seems most likely, as the phrase serves as a password of sorts that the disciples are told will be sufficient.
32. The phrase kathōs eipen autois ('just as he had told them') emphasizes Jesus's prophetic accuracy and sovereign knowledge. The narrative moves briskly through the fulfillment of his instructions.
33. The plural hoi kyrioi autou ('its owners') is noteworthy — the colt was jointly owned, perhaps by a family. The question matches Jesus's prediction exactly (v. 31), further confirming his foreknowledge.
34. The disciples repeat Jesus's exact words, and the response is apparently sufficient — the owners do not object further. This suggests either that Jesus was known to the owners, that 'the Lord' functioned as an agreed-upon authorization, or that the narrative compresses a longer exchange.
35. The casting of garments (himatia, 'outer cloaks') over the animal serves as an improvised saddle but also echoes the coronation of Jehu, where supporters threw their cloaks under him on the steps (2 Kings 9:13). The verb epebibasan ('they set upon, they mounted') indicates the disciples physically helped Jesus onto the animal — a formal enthronement gesture.
35. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 2 Kings 9:13 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
36. The imperfect hystērōnyon ('they were spreading') indicates a continuous action as the procession moved — people kept laying cloaks in his path. This echoes 2 Kings 9:13 more directly. Luke omits the palm branches mentioned in John 12:13 and the 'branches from the fields' in Mark 11:8.
36. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 2 Kings 9:13. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
37. Luke specifies the location precisely: the katabasei ('descent, downward slope') of the Mount of Olives, where the panoramic view of Jerusalem and the temple would have come into full sight. Luke's version attributes the praise to 'the whole crowd of disciples' (hapan to plēthos tōn mathētōn) rather than the general crowd. The dynameis ('mighty works, miracles') they had witnessed become the basis for their praise.
38. The acclamation quotes Psalm 118:26 but Luke inserts 'the king' (ho basileus) into the psalm citation — making the royal claim explicit where the original psalm was more general. The phrase 'peace in heaven and glory in the highest' (en ouranō eirēnē kai doxa en hypsistois) echoes the angels' song at Jesus's birth (2:14) but reverses the direction: at the nativity, peace was proclaimed on earth; here, peace is proclaimed in heaven. The inclusio (literary bookend) connecting birth and entry into Jerusalem is deliberate.
38. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Psalms 118:26 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
39. The Pharisees are 'in the crowd' (apo tou ochlou), not separate from it — they are witnesses to the procession. Their demand that Jesus silence the disciples reveals their alarm at the messianic implications of the acclamation. The address 'Teacher' (didaskale) rather than 'Lord' reflects their refusal to acknowledge Jesus's royal claim.
40. Jesus's response is among his most memorable sayings (unique to Luke). The imagery of stones crying out may echo Habakkuk 2:11 ('the stone will cry out from the wall'). The declaration implies that the praise is cosmically necessary — creation itself would testify if humans fell silent. The conditional ean ... siōpēsousin ('if they should be silent') uses a future indicative in a conditional clause, expressing a vivid, almost impossible hypothetical.
40. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Habakkuk 2:11 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
41. The verb eklausen ('he wept') indicates audible weeping or sobbing, not silent tears (for which dakryō would be used, as in John 11:35). This is unique to Luke and profoundly ironic: the crowd is celebrating while Jesus mourns. He weeps at the moment of his greatest public triumph because he sees what the crowd cannot — the city's coming destruction.
42. The sentence breaks off — an anacoluthon (grammatically incomplete sentence) that mimics the emotion of the speaker. The phrase kai sy ('even you') is emphatic: Jerusalem, of all cities, should have recognized the moment. The ta pros eirēnēn ('the things pertaining to peace') echoes the city's name (Yerushalayim, traditionally connected to shalom). The passive ekrybē ('they have been hidden') is a divine passive — God has concealed from Jerusalem what it needed to see, a judicial act of divine hardening.

43. The military language precisely describes a Roman siege: charaka ('palisade, siege embankment') refers to the wooden and earthen rampart that encircled a besieged city. The verb perikyklōsousin ('will encircle') and synexousin ('will press in, constrict') describe progressive tightening of the siege. This was fulfilled literally in AD 70 when Titus's forces built a circumvallation wall around Jerusalem (Josephus, War 5.12.1-2).
44. The verb edaphiousin ('dash to the ground, level, raze') is violent — it includes the image of smashing against the ground. The inclusion of 'your children within you' (ta tekna sou en soi) makes the prophecy personal and devastating. The phrase ton kairon tēs episkopēs sou ('the time of your visitation') is the theological crux: episkopē means 'visitation, inspection' — God has come to inspect his city and found it wanting. The kairōs ('appointed time, decisive moment') is distinguished from chronos ('ordinary time'); this was the unique, unrepeatable moment of divine visitation that Jerusalem missed.
45. Luke's account of the temple cleansing is the most compressed of all four Gospels — he mentions only sellers (pōlountas), not buyers, money changers, or dove sellers. The verb ekballein ('to drive out, to throw out') is the same word used for casting out demons, giving the action a purging quality. The temple commerce, though necessary for sacrifice, had apparently expanded beyond appropriate bounds, commercializing sacred space.
46. Jesus combines two prophetic texts: Isaiah 56:7 ('my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations') and Jeremiah 7:11 ('Has this house become a den of robbers in your eyes?'). Luke omits Isaiah's 'for all nations' (which Mark 11:17 includes). The word lēstōn ('robbers, bandits') is stronger than 'thieves' — it implies violent, predatory exploitation. Jeremiah's original context was a warning that the first temple's destruction was imminent because the people treated it as a safe haven for injustice; Jesus implies the same fate for the second temple.
46. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 56:7. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
46. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Jeremiah 7:11. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
47. The imperfect ēn didaskōn ('he was teaching') and ezētoun ('they were seeking') establish two ongoing, simultaneous activities: Jesus teaches publicly while the authorities plot privately. Luke adds hoi prōtoi tou laou ('the leading men of the people') to Mark's chief priests and scribes, broadening the opposition to include the lay aristocracy. The verb apolesai ('to destroy, to kill') is the same word used for what the flood did to Noah's generation (17:27).
48. The verb exekremeto ('hung upon, was suspended from') is a vivid metaphor — the people literally 'hung from him listening.' It appears only here in the New Testament. The popular support for Jesus creates a political obstacle that forces the authorities to seek covert means, which they eventually find through Judas (22:1-6). This verse sets up the tension that drives the passion narrative: the leaders want Jesus dead, but the people's devotion makes open action impossible.

20

Summary: *Luke 20 records a series of confrontations between Jesus and the Jerusalem authorities during his final week of teaching in the temple. The chapter moves through the question of Jesus's authority, the parable of the wicked tenants, the question about paying taxes to Caesar, the Sadducees' question about the resurrection, and Jesus's counter-question about David's son. Each encounter escalates the conflict that will lead to his arrest.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The parable of the wicked tenants is one of the clearest allegorical parables in the Synoptic tradition, with the vineyard owner representing God, the tenants representing Israel's leaders, the servants representing the prophets, and the beloved son representing Jesus. The 'render to Caesar' saying is one of the most cited and debated pronouncements in Christian political theology. The Sadducees' resurrection question provides rare insight into an intra-Jewish theological dispute that Jesus adjudicates by appealing to the Torah itself — the only scripture the Sadducees accepted.*

Translation Friction: *The parable of the wicked tenants has been historically misused to justify antisemitism. The parable targets the leadership class, not the Jewish people as a whole. We render the Greek as written and note the parable's allegorical dimensions without importing supersessionist theology. The 'render to Caesar' passage is deliberately ambiguous — Jesus does not resolve the tension between divine and imperial claims, and we do not resolve it either.*

Connections: *The vineyard parable draws on Isaiah 5:1-7 (the Song of the Vineyard). The rejected cornerstone quotation comes from Psalm 118:22, the same psalm quoted during the triumphal entry (19:38). The resurrection argument cites Exodus 3:6 (the burning bush). The 'David's son' question quotes Psalm 110:1, the most frequently cited Old Testament text in the New Testament.*

¹One day, as he was teaching the people in the temple and proclaiming the good news, the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted him. ²Spoke to him and stated, Tell us, by what authority doest you these things? or who is he that offered you this authority? ³He answered them, "I will also ask you a question. Tell me: ⁴Was the baptism of John from heaven, or from human origin?" ⁵They discussed it among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' ⁶But if we say, 'From human origin,' all the people will stone us, because they are convinced that John was a prophet." ⁷So they answered that they did not know where it came from. ⁸Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things." ⁹He began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard, leased it to tenant farmers, and went away for a long time. ¹⁰At harvest time he sent a slave to the tenants so they would give him his share of the vineyard's fruit. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. ¹¹He sent yet another slave, and they beat that one too, dishonored him, and sent him away empty-handed. ¹²He sent still a third, and they wounded this one too and threw him out. ¹³Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Perhaps they will respect him.' ¹⁴But when the tenants saw him, they discussed it among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Let us kill him, so that the inheritance will be ours.' ¹⁵They threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others." When they heard this, they said, "May it never be!" ¹⁷But Jesus looked directly at them and said, "Then what is the meaning of this scripture: 'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone'? ¹⁸Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and the one on whom it falls — it will crush him." ¹⁹The scribes and the chief priests wanted to seize him at that very hour, but they feared the people, for they knew he had told this parable against them. ²⁰Watching for an opportunity, they sent spies who pretended to be sincere, so that they might catch him in something he said, in order to hand him over to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor. ²¹They questioned him, saying, "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach correctly and show no partiality, but teach the way of God truthfully. ²²Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" ²³But he saw through their craftiness and said to them, ²⁴"Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it bear?" They said, "Caesar's." ²⁵He said to them, "Then give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God." ²⁶They were unable to catch him in anything he said in front of the people, and amazed by his answer, they fell silent. ²⁷Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked, ²⁸"Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies leaving a wife but no children, the man should marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁹Now there were seven brothers. The first married a wife and died childless. ³⁰The second ³¹The third picked up her. And in like manner the seven also — then they departed no children, and died. ³²Finally, the woman also died. ³³In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For all seven had her as wife." ³⁴Jesus said to them, "The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵But those who are considered worthy to attain that age and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. ³⁶For they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. ³⁷But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' ³⁸He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all are alive to him." ³⁹Some of the scribes responded, "Teacher, you have spoken well." ⁴⁰For they no longer dared to ask him anything. ⁴¹Then he said to them, "How can they say that the Christ is David's son? ⁴²For David himself says in the Book of Psalms, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, ⁴³Till I make your enemies your footstool. ⁴⁴David thus calls him 'Lord' — so how can he be his son?" ⁴⁵While all the people were listening, he said to his disciples, ⁴⁶"Watch out for the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the places of honor at banquets. ⁴⁷They devour the houses of widows and make long prayers for appearance's sake. These will receive a more severe judgment."

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. Luke uses the verb *euangelizomenou* ('proclaiming good news, preaching the gospel'), unique to his version of this scene. The three groups — chief priests (*archiereis*), scribes (*grammateis*), and elders (*presbyteroi*) — constitute the Sanhedrin, the supreme Jewish governing council. Their approach is described as *epestēsan* ('stood upon, confronted'), implying an official and possibly hostile approach.

2. The double question targets both the nature ('what kind of authority') and the source ('who authorized you') of Jesus's actions. The word *exousia* ('authority, right, power') is a legal and religious term — they are demanding his credentials. The phrase *tauta poieis* ('you are doing these things') refers to the temple cleansing and the teaching; both require rabbinic or priestly authorization that Jesus has not sought.
3. Jesus's counter-question is a standard rabbinic technique — answering a question with a question was not evasion but a recognized form of argumentation. By establishing that they must answer first, Jesus shifts the power dynamic of the exchange.
4. The dichotomy is absolute: *ex ouranou* ('from heaven,' meaning 'from God') or *ex anthrōpōn* ('from humans,' meaning 'of merely human invention'). There is no middle ground. The question is strategically brilliant because the authorities' answer to this question will logically determine the answer to their own question about Jesus's authority — since John endorsed Jesus.
5. The verb *synelogisanto* ('they reasoned together, calculated together') reveals that their deliberation is political calculation, not theological inquiry. They evaluate each possible answer not for its truth but for its consequences. If John's baptism was from God, their failure to submit to it indicts them.
6. The verb *katalithasei* ('will stone') may be literal or hyperbolic — stoning was the Torah-prescribed punishment for blasphemy and false prophecy, and denying a true prophet could be perceived as blasphemous. The perfect participle *pepeismenos* ('having been convinced, firmly persuaded') indicates a settled, unshakeable popular conviction about John's prophetic status.
7. Their answer *mē eidenai pothen* ('not to know from where') is an admission of either ignorance or cowardice — the religious leaders of Israel profess inability to evaluate a major prophetic movement. The admission damages their own credibility: if they cannot assess John, how can they assess Jesus?
8. Jesus does not refuse to answer because he cannot but because they have refused to engage honestly. The logical implication is clear to the audience: if they had acknowledged John's divine authority, the answer about Jesus's authority would follow naturally. Their dishonesty forfeits their right to a direct answer.
9. The parable draws directly on Isaiah 5:1-7, where the vineyard represents Israel and the owner represents God. The *geōrgois* ('farmers, vine-dressers, tenants') are those entrusted with caring for what belongs to another. The detail *apedēmēsen chronous hikanous* ('went away for a considerable time') explains why the tenants might grow presumptuous — the owner's long absence leads them to act as though the vineyard were their own.
9. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 5:1-7. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
10. The *kairō* ('at the appointed time, at the season') refers to the harvest — the owner sends for what is rightfully his. The verb *deirantes* ('having beaten, having flayed') indicates a physical assault. The slave represents the prophets sent to Israel's leaders demanding the fruit of faithful obedience. Being sent away *kenon* ('empty') means the owner received nothing of what was owed.
11. The verb *prosetheto* ('he added, he proceeded') is a Septuagintalism — a Hebrew idiom (*vayosef*, 'he added again') rendered literally in Greek. Each subsequent sending represents another prophetic mission. The addition of *atimasantes* ('having dishonored, having treated shamefully') escalates the violence beyond the first episode.
12. The escalation continues: the first slave was beaten, the second beaten and dishonored, the third *traumatisantes* ('wounded') and *exebalon* ('thrown out, expelled'). Luke uses three slaves (Mark has multiple unnamed servants); the threefold pattern creates a climactic buildup to the sending of the son. The history of Israel's treatment of the prophets (cf. Nehemiah 9:26, 2 Chronicles 36:15-16) is compressed into three episodes.
12. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Nehemiah 9:26. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
12. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on 2 Chronicles 36:15-16. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
13. The phrase *ton huion mou ton agapēton* ('my beloved son') is identical to the divine voice at Jesus's baptism (3:22) and transfiguration (9:35), making the allegorical identification unmistakable. The word *isōs* ('perhaps') reveals the owner's vulnerability — he sends his most precious envoy without certainty of success, an astonishing portrayal of divine risk-taking. The question *ti poiēsō* ('what shall I do?') humanizes the owner's deliberation.
14. The tenants' reasoning reflects first-century land law: if an owner died without clear succession and the land was unclaimed, those working it could potentially claim it by possession. Their calculation is both logical and monstrous. The word *klēronomos* ('heir') and *klēronomia* ('inheritance') are covenantal terms — the inheritance of Israel's promises is at stake. The verb *apokteinōmen* ('let us kill') is a deliberative subjunctive expressing a cold, calculated decision.
15. Luke reverses Mark's order: in Mark 12:8, they kill the son first and then throw the body out; in Luke, they throw him out first and then kill him. Luke's order may reflect Jesus's actual death outside the walls of Jerusalem (Hebrews 13:12). The question *ti oun poiēsei* ('what then will he do?') turns the audience into judges of their own case — they must pronounce the verdict before realizing it applies to them.
16. In Luke (unlike Mark and Matthew), Jesus answers his own question rather than letting the audience answer. The phrase *allois* ('to others') is deliberately unspecified — it could refer to Gentiles, to new leaders, or to a renewed community. The audience's response *mē genoito* ('may it never happen!') is a strong deprecation indicating they understood the parable's implication and recoiled from it. This phrase is Paul's characteristic expression of horror (Romans 6:2, 9:14, etc.).

17. The verb *emleptō* ('having looked intently at, having fixed his gaze upon') conveys a penetrating, searching look. Jesus quotes Psalm 118:22, which was already a messianic text in Jewish interpretation. The 'builders' (*oikodomountes*) are the temple authorities — those responsible for constructing God's house. The *kephalēn gōnias* ('head of the corner, cornerstone') is the stone that determines the alignment of the entire structure. The rejected stone becomes the most important one.
17. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Psalms 118:22. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
18. This expansion of the stone imagery draws on Isaiah 8:14-15 (a stone of stumbling) and Daniel 2:34-35, 44-45 (the stone that crushes the statue). Two fates are described: those who stumble over the stone are 'shattered' (*synthlasthēsetai*), and those the stone falls upon are 'winnowed to dust' (*likmēsei*). The verb *likmēsei* ('will winnow, will scatter like chaff') is agricultural imagery — total pulverization. There is no neutral response to the cornerstone.
18. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 8:14-15 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
18. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Daniel 2:34-35 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
19. The phrase *en autē tē hōra* ('at that very hour') indicates an immediate, rage-driven impulse. The verb *epibalein tas cheiras* ('to lay hands upon, to seize') is a technical term for arrest. Their recognition that the parable was *pros autous* ('against them, directed at them') confirms the allegorical reading: they are the wicked tenants. Fear of the people (*ephobēthēsan ton laon*) is the only restraint, not conscience or uncertainty.
20. The word *enkathetous* ('spies, secret agents, persons planted in ambush') appears only here in the New Testament. The verb *hypokrinomenous* ('pretending, play-acting') is the root of 'hypocrite' — they perform sincerity. The ultimate goal is *paradounai* ('to hand over, to betray') Jesus to the Roman governor (*hēgemonos*, Pontius Pilate). The authorities have moved from wanting to kill him (19:47) to a concrete strategy for using Roman power to accomplish it.
21. The flattery is elaborate and calculated. The phrase *ou lambaneis prosōpon* ('you do not receive a face, you show no partiality') is a Septuagintalism translating the Hebrew *nasa panim*, a judicial term meaning to judge without favoritism. By praising Jesus's impartiality, the spies set up a question designed to force a politically compromising answer regardless of which side he takes.
22. The word *phoron* ('tribute, tax') refers specifically to the Roman poll tax (*tributum capitis*), which was deeply resented as a symbol of subjugation. The question *exestin* ('is it lawful/permitted?') frames the issue in terms of Torah compliance. If Jesus says 'yes,' he alienates Jewish nationalists; if 'no,' he can be reported to Rome as a seditious revolutionary. The trap is a masterpiece of political engineering.
23. The verb *katanoēsas* ('having perceived, having seen through') implies thorough understanding. The noun *panourgian* ('craftiness, cunning, trickery') is a strong word — it suggests malicious cleverness. Luke omits Jesus's counter-accusation 'Why are you testing me?' (found in Mark 12:15 and Matthew 22:18), moving directly to his response.
24. The *dēnariion* ('denarius') was a Roman silver coin worth a day's wage, bearing the image (*eikona*) of the emperor (likely Tiberius) and an inscription (*epigraphēn*) reading 'Tiberius Caesar, Son of the Divine Augustus.' The word *eikōn* ('image') is the same word used in Genesis 1:26-27 (Septuagint) for humanity made in God's 'image' — a connection Jesus will exploit in the next verse. The fact that the spies can produce a Roman coin in the temple precincts is itself ironic.
24. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Genesis 1:26-27. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
25. The verb *apodote* ('give back, return, repay') implies returning what already belongs to someone — the coin bears Caesar's image and therefore is already his. The parallel structure (*ta Kaisaros Kaisari ... ta tou theou tō theō*) creates an apparent equivalence, but the second clause subverts the first: if the coin bearing Caesar's image belongs to Caesar, then human beings bearing God's image belong to God. The claim of God is total and ultimate; the claim of Caesar is derivative and limited. Jesus neither endorses nor condemns Roman taxation but reframes the entire question.
26. The verb *ischysan* ('they were able, they had the strength') with the negative *ouk* indicates complete failure of their strategy. The verb *thaumasantes* ('having been amazed, astonished') indicates genuine surprise — even his enemies recognize the brilliance of his response. The verb *esigēsān* ('they became silent, they held their peace') marks the end of this confrontation: the spies withdraw, speechless.
27. Luke explains the Sadducees' theological position (*antilegontes anastasin mē einai*, 'denying that there is a resurrection') for his predominantly Gentile audience. The Sadducees were the priestly aristocracy who accepted only the Torah (five books of Moses) as authoritative and rejected the oral tradition, angels, spirits, and bodily resurrection — doctrines they considered innovations without Pentateuchal support.
28. The Sadducees cite the levirate marriage law from Deuteronomy 25:5-6, which required a surviving brother to marry his deceased brother's widow and produce an heir in the dead brother's name. The verb *exanastēsē* ('raise up') is ironic — they use 'resurrection' language (*anastasis*) in the context of procreation while denying actual resurrection. The law's purpose was to preserve the deceased brother's name and inheritance in Israel.
28. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Deuteronomy 25:5-6 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
29. The number seven represents completeness — seven brothers ensures the scenario is exhaustive. The hypothetical case is likely a stock argument the Sadducees used regularly in debates with Pharisees about the resurrection.

30. Luke compresses the narrative here. The SBLGNT has only *kai ho deuteros* ('and the second') with the remaining details implied from context. Some manuscripts expand the verse, but the critical text is remarkably terse.
31. The phrase *hōsautōs de kai hoi hepta* ('likewise also the seven') telescopes the remaining four brothers into a single statement. The cumulative effect — seven marriages, seven deaths, no children — is designed to make the resurrection scenario seem absurd: whose wife would she be if all seven rise?
32. The word *hysteron* ('lastly, finally') closes the scenario. All eight parties are now dead, setting up the question in the next verse. The woman's death is mentioned without comment — she is the silent center of a legal puzzle constructed entirely by men.
33. The question assumes that resurrected life is simply a continuation of earthly life with all its social structures intact. The Sadducees consider this *reductio ad absurdum* proof that resurrection is logically impossible. Their error, as Jesus will show, lies in their assumption about the nature of the resurrected state.
34. The phrase *hoi huiōi tou aiōnos toutou* ('the sons of this age') is a Semitism meaning 'those who belong to the present age' — people living in the current world order. The two verbs *gamousin* ('marry,' active, typically of men) and *gamiskontai* ('are given in marriage,' passive, typically of women) reflect the ancient social reality of arranged marriages.
35. The phrase *hoi kataxiōthentes* ('those considered worthy, those deemed deserving') raises the question of who determines worthiness — the passive voice suggests God makes this determination. 'That age' (*tou aiōnos ekeinou*) is the age to come, the new creation. Jesus's answer demolishes the Sadducees' premise: resurrected life is qualitatively different from present life, not merely a continuation of it. Marriage, as a social institution tied to procreation and mortality, is unnecessary in a state where death no longer exists.
36. The word *isangeloi* ('equal to angels, angel-like') appears only here in the New Testament. The comparison is specific: like angels, the resurrected do not die and do not procreate — it does not mean they become angels. The chain of logic: no death no need for marriage (which exists partly to replace the dying) the Sadducees' question is based on a false premise. The phrase *huiōi theou* ('children of God') is defined by the following phrase: they are God's children precisely because they are *huiōi tēs anastaseōs* ('children of the resurrection').
37. Jesus's brilliance lies in citing the Torah itself — the only scripture the Sadducees accepted. The phrase *epi tēs batou* ('at the bush') uses a common method of scriptural reference (naming a passage by its prominent feature), referring to Exodus 3:6. The argument: God identifies himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob long after their deaths. If they no longer exist, the statement is meaningless — God would be the God of nothing.
37. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 3:6. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
38. The concluding statement is devastating to the Sadducean position: if God is the God of the living, and if he identifies himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob must be alive. The phrase *pantes gar autō zōsin* ('for all are alive to him') is unique to Luke and extends the principle beyond the three patriarchs: from God's perspective, all the covenant dead are living. This is not a proof of bodily resurrection per se but of continued personal existence after death — which is the necessary precondition for resurrection.
39. The scribes who commend Jesus here are likely Pharisees, who affirmed the resurrection and would have been delighted to see the Sadducees' argument dismantled. The phrase *kalōs eipas* ('you have spoken well, you have answered beautifully') is a genuine academic compliment from theological allies on this particular point.
40. The verb *etolmōn* ('they dared, they had the courage') with the negative *ouketi* ('no longer') indicates that Jesus's series of responses has silenced all challengers. The progression through the chapter — Pharisees, Herodians (via spies), Sadducees — represents every major faction, and all have been defeated. The intellectual conflict is over; only political violence remains as their option.
41. Having silenced all challengers, Jesus now poses his own question. The 'they' (*legousin*) is impersonal — 'how is it said?' The question does not deny Davidic descent (which Matthew and Luke's genealogies affirm) but challenges whether 'son of David' adequately describes the Messiah's identity. The question introduces a christological riddle that the audience cannot resolve.
42. Jesus quotes Psalm 110:1, the most frequently cited Old Testament text in the New Testament. The Greek has *kyrios* ('Lord') for both the Hebrew *YHWH* and *Adonai*, creating an ambiguity that the Hebrew original distinguishes: 'YHWH said to my lord (adoni).' The psalm is attributed to David, and Jesus accepts Davidic authorship as the basis for his argument. The 'right hand' position (*ek dexiōn*) is the position of supreme honor and shared authority.
42. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Psalms 110:1. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
43. The image of enemies as a footstool (*hypopodion tōn podōn*) derives from the ancient Near Eastern practice of a conqueror placing his foot on the neck of a defeated king (cf. Joshua 10:24). The 'until' (*heōs an*) does not imply a time limit on the enthronement but marks the completion of the conquest.
43. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Psalms 110:1 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
43. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Joshua 10:24 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.

44. The argument is straightforward: in the culture of the ancient Near East, a father never calls his son 'lord' — the honor flows upward, from son to father. If David calls the Messiah 'my Lord,' the Messiah must be greater than David, not merely his descendant. Jesus does not deny that the Messiah is David's son but implies that he is also something more — a claim the audience must work out for themselves. The question is left unanswered, hovering over the narrative.
45. The phrase *akouontos pantos tou laou* ('all the people listening') specifies that Jesus's warning about the scribes is delivered publicly, not privately. The people hear his critique of their religious leaders, adding to the leaders' humiliation and rage.
46. The *stolais* ('long robes') were distinctive garments that marked the wearer as a person of learning and status. Four desires are listed in ascending order of social privilege: public recognition in the streets (greetings), public honor in commerce (marketplaces), religious honor (synagogue seats), and social honor (banquet positions). The verb *philountōn* ('loving, desiring') reveals that these are not incidental perks but actively sought status markers.
47. The verb *katesthousin* ('they devour, they consume') is visceral — the metaphor of eating someone's house evokes predatory exploitation. Widows (*chērōn*) were the most vulnerable members of society, the very people the Torah commanded to protect (Exodus 22:22, Deuteronomy 10:18). The phrase *prophasei* ('for a pretext, for appearance') exposes their prayers as performance. The 'greater judgment' (*perissoteron krima*) implies degrees of accountability — those who exploit the vulnerable while performing piety face the most severe divine reckoning.
47. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 22:22. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
47. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Deuteronomy 10:18. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.

21

Summary: *Luke 21 opens with the widow's offering, transitions to Jesus's prediction of the temple's destruction, and then delivers the extended eschatological discourse — sometimes called the Olivet Discourse, though Luke does not locate it on the Mount of Olives. Jesus describes the signs preceding Jerusalem's fall and the coming of the Son of Man: wars, earthquakes, persecution, the siege of Jerusalem, cosmic disturbances, and the command to watch and pray. The chapter concludes with a summary of Jesus's daily teaching routine during his final week.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke's version of the eschatological discourse is notably more specific about the fall of Jerusalem (AD 70) than Mark's or Matthew's versions. Verse 20's reference to 'Jerusalem surrounded by armies' replaces Mark's more cryptic 'abomination of desolation' (Mark 13:14), suggesting Luke writes for an audience that either witnessed or is aware of the Roman siege. The parable of the fig tree and the declaration that 'this generation will not pass away' create one of the most debated interpretive puzzles in the Gospels.*

Translation Friction: *The relationship between the destruction of Jerusalem and the coming of the Son of Man is ambiguous — whether Jesus describes one event, two events separated by time, or two aspects of one reality is debated. We render the text without harmonizing or imposing a particular eschatological framework. 'This generation' (v. 32) is rendered literally; its referent (Jesus's contemporaries, or the generation that sees the signs) is left to the reader.*

Connections: *The widow's offering connects thematically to 20:47 (scribes who devour widows' houses). The temple destruction prophecy fulfills 19:44. The persecution predictions anticipate Acts (where they are fulfilled in detail). The cosmic signs draw on Isaiah 13:10, Joel 2:30-31, and Daniel 7:13-14. The fig tree parable echoes the cursed fig tree of Mark 11 (which Luke omits). The command to 'watch and pray' prepares for Gethsemane (22:40-46).*

1He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. 2He also saw a poor widow putting in two small copper coins. 3He said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. 4For all these others contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood she had." 5When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and dedicated gifts, he said, 6"As for these things you are looking at, the days will come when not one stone will be left on another — every one will be torn down." 7They asked him, "Teacher, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?" 8He said, "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. 9When

you hear of wars and uprisings, do not be terrified. These things must happen first, but the end will not come immediately." ¹ Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, and famines and plagues in various places, and there will be terrifying events and great signs from heaven. ¹² But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you, handing you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. ¹³ This will be your opportunity to testify. ¹⁴ So resolve in your hearts not to prepare your defense in advance, ¹⁵ For I will provide you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries will not be able to oppose nor resist. ¹⁶ You will be handed over even by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ You will be hated by everyone because of my name. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹ By your endurance you will gain your lives. ²⁰ "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has drawn near. ²¹ Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those inside the city get out, and let those in the countryside not enter it. ²² For these are days of vengeance, so that everything that has been written will be fulfilled. ²³ How terrible it will be for those who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the land and wrath against this people. ²⁴ They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away as captives to all the nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. ²⁵ "There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, and on the earth distress among nations, bewildered by the roaring and surging of the sea. ²⁶ People will faint from fear and dread of what is coming upon the inhabited world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then will they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with authority and remarkable glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to happen, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." ²⁹ He told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. ³⁰ When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹ In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. ³⁴ "Watch yourselves, so that your hearts are not weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and the worries of this life, and that day closes on you suddenly ³⁵ Because as a snare will it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Stay alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man." ³⁷ During the day he was teaching in the temple, but at night he would go out and spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives. ³⁸ And all the people would come to him early in the morning in the temple to listen to him.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The gazophylakion ('treasury') was located in the Court of the Women, where thirteen trumpet-shaped collection boxes lined the wall, each designated for a specific type of offering. The verb *ballontas* ('throwing, casting') suggests the coins made audible noise as they fell — the rich would have made a conspicuous display.
2. The adjective *penichran* ('needy, poor') is stronger than the usual word for poor (*ptōchos*); it implies destitution. The *lepta* ('small coins') were the smallest denomination in circulation — each worth about one-128th of a denarius. Two *lepta* made a *quadrans*, the Roman minimum for a transaction. She gives the absolute smallest possible offering.
3. The phrase *pleion pantōn* ('more than all') is a comparative that reverses human arithmetic: by every measurable standard, her gift is the smallest, yet Jesus declares it the largest. The adverb *alēthōs* ('truly') emphasizes the counterintuitive nature of the claim. Jesus measures giving not by amount but by cost to the giver.
4. The contrast is between *perisseuontos* ('surplus, abundance, what overflows') and *hysterēmatos* ('deficit, lack, poverty'). The phrase *panta ton bion hon eichen* ('all the life/livelihood she had') uses *bios*, which means both 'life' and 'livelihood' — she gave not just her money but her means of survival. This connects directly to 20:47's denunciation of scribes who devour widows' houses: the temple system that should protect her consumes her last resources.
5. Herod's temple was one of the ancient world's architectural wonders. The *lithois kalois* ('beautiful stones') likely refers to the massive white limestone blocks (some weighing over 500 tons) that formed the walls. The *anathēmasin* ('dedicated gifts, votive offerings') included golden vine decorations and shields donated by wealthy patrons. Josephus describes the temple as covered in gold plates that blazed in the morning sun.
6. The prophecy *lithos epi lithō* ('stone upon stone') predicts total destruction. This was fulfilled in AD 70 when Titus's legions dismantled the temple, reportedly prying apart stones to recover gold that had melted into the crevices during the fire. The verb *katalythēsetai* ('will be torn down, demolished') is emphatic. The double negative construction (*ouk ... hos ou*) means 'there will not be a single stone left standing upon another that is not torn down' — comprehensive destruction without exception.

7. The two questions — 'when?' (pote) and 'what sign?' (ti to sēmeion) — shape the rest of the discourse. Luke's version has only two questions (unlike Matthew's three in 24:3, which adds 'and of the end of the age'). This gives Luke's discourse a tighter focus on the destruction of Jerusalem rather than the end of the world.
8. The first warning is against deception (planēthēte, 'be led astray'). The phrase ego eimi ('I am he') echoes the divine self-revelation formula (Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 43:10), suggesting false messiahs who claim divine status. Luke uniquely adds ho kairos ēngiken ('the time has drawn near'), warning against those who claim the end is imminent. The command mē poreuthēte opisō autōn ('do not go after them') prohibits joining their movements.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Exodus 3:14 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 43:10 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
9. Luke uses akatastasias ('disorders, instabilities, uprisings') instead of Mark's 'rumors of wars,' a term that better fits the political turbulence of the 60s AD in Judea. The verb ptoēthēte ('be terrified, be startled') implies a visceral, panicked fear. The phrase ouk eutheōs to telos ('not immediately the end') is another distinctly Lukan addition, tempering eschatological urgency: wars are not the end itself but precursors.
10. The formula ethnos ep' ethnos kai basileia epi basileian ('nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom') echoes Isaiah 19:2 and 2 Chronicles 15:6, drawing on prophetic language for catastrophic upheaval. The scope is international, not merely local — the entire political order will be convulsed.
10. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Isaiah 19:2 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
10. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes 2 Chronicles 15:6 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
11. Luke combines seismoι ('earthquakes'), limoi ('famines'), and loimoi ('plagues, pestilences') — the last two form a near-rhyme in Greek (limoi kai loimoi), which may be a mnemonic device. The phobētra ('terrifying things, terrors') and sēmeia megala ('great signs') from heaven are unique to Luke and expand the catalog of portents beyond the natural to the cosmic.
12. The phrase pro de toutōn pantōn ('but before all these things') establishes a chronological marker: persecution of the disciples precedes the cosmic upheavals. The progression from synagogue trials to prison to royal courts mirrors exactly what happens in Acts: apostles before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4-5), Stephen's synagogue trial (Acts 6-7), James and Peter in prison (Acts 12), Paul before governors Felix and Festus and King Agrippa (Acts 24-26). Luke's Jesus prophesies what Luke the historian later narrates.
13. The phrase apobēsetai hymin eis martyriōn ('it will result for you in testimony') reframes persecution as opportunity. The word martyriōn ('testimony, witness') is the root of 'martyrdom' — in early Christianity, the two concepts were inseparable. What the persecutors intend as silencing becomes a platform for proclamation.
14. The phrase thete en tais kardiais hymōn ('set in your hearts, settle it firmly') indicates a decided commitment. The verb promeletān ('to practice beforehand, to rehearse') was used for rehearsing speeches — Jesus forbids the kind of anxious preparation that suggests reliance on human eloquence rather than divine provision.
15. Unlike Mark 13:11, which attributes the words to the Holy Spirit, Luke has Jesus say 'I will give' (egō dōsō) — a first-person divine promise. The pair stoma kai sophian ('a mouth and wisdom') means both the content of speech and the skill to deliver it. The two verbs antistēnai ('to resist, withstand') and anteipein ('to contradict, speak against') cover both physical intimidation and intellectual rebuttal — opponents will fail on both fronts. This is fulfilled in Acts: Stephen's opponents 'could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking' (Acts 6:10).
16. The verb paradothēsēthe ('you will be handed over, betrayed') is the same word used for Judas's betrayal of Jesus (22:4, 6). The escalating list — parents, brothers, relatives, friends — describes the disintegration of the most intimate bonds. The phrase thanatōsousin ex hymōn ('they will kill some of you') is blunt: following Jesus will cost some disciples their lives. This is fulfilled in Acts with the deaths of Stephen (Acts 7) and James (Acts 12:2).
17. The phrase hypo pantōn ('by all') is hyperbolic but communicates the universality of the hostility — opposition will come from every direction. The phrase dia to onoma mou ('because of my name') identifies Jesus's name as the cause of hatred, connecting back to verse 12. Bearing his name marks the disciples as targets.
18. This creates an apparent paradox with verse 16 ('some of you will be put to death'): how can not a hair perish if some will die? The resolution lies in the eschatological perspective — physical death does not represent ultimate loss for those who belong to Christ. The double negative ou mē ('by no means, absolutely not') is the strongest Greek negation, expressing absolute divine protection of the disciples' ultimate destiny, even through martyrdom.
19. The word hypomonē ('endurance, steadfast persistence, patient endurance under suffering') is a key virtue in early Christianity. The verb ktēsasthe can be either imperative ('gain!') or future indicative ('you will gain') — the ambiguity may be intentional, functioning as both command and promise. The psychas ('souls, lives') echoes 17:33: the way to preserve one's life is not through self-protection but through faithful endurance.
20. This is Luke's most distinctive departure from the Markan parallel: where Mark 13:14 has the cryptic 'abomination of desolation standing where it should not,' Luke has the concrete image of Jerusalem surrounded by armies (stratopedōn, 'military camps'). The word erēmōsis ('desolation,

devastation, depopulation') echoes Daniel 9:27 and 12:11, connecting Jesus's prophecy to the Danielic tradition. This verse is often cited as evidence that Luke wrote after AD 70, though prophetic specificity does not require post-event composition.

- 20.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Daniel 9:27 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 21.** Three groups receive three commands: those in Judea (flee to mountains), those inside Jerusalem (leave immediately), those in the surrounding countryside (do not seek refuge in the city). According to Eusebius (Church History 3.5.3), the Jerusalem Christians did flee to Pella in Transjordan before the Roman siege, possibly in response to this prophecy. The verb *ekchōreitōsan* ('let them depart, withdraw') is unique to Luke among the Synoptics.
- 22.** The phrase *hēmerai ekdikēseōs* ('days of vengeance/retribution') echoes Hosea 9:7 and Isaiah 63:4 — prophetic language for divine judgment on a faithless people. The phrase *panta ta gegrammena* ('everything written') refers to the prophetic warnings in the Hebrew Bible about judgment on Jerusalem (cf. Deuteronomy 28:49-57, Daniel 9:26-27). Luke frames the destruction not as a Roman political action but as the fulfillment of prophetic scripture.
- 22.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Hosea 9:7. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 22.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 63:4. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 22.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Deuteronomy 28:49-57. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 22.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Daniel 9:26-27. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 23.** The 'woe' (*ouai*) is an expression of grief, not a curse — Jesus mourns the suffering of the most vulnerable. Pregnant women and nursing mothers would be the least able to flee. The phrase *anankē megalē* ('great distress, dire necessity') describes the extreme suffering of the siege. Luke adds *orgē tō laō toutō* ('wrath against this people'), making explicit what is implicit in Mark — the siege is an expression of divine judgment.
- 24.** This verse is unique to Luke and describes the post-destruction fate of Jerusalem with remarkable precision: *stomati machairēs* ('by the mouth/edge of the sword') — Josephus reports that 1.1 million Jews died in the siege; *aichmalōtisthēsontai* ('will be taken captive') — Josephus reports 97,000 taken prisoner. The phrase *kairoi ethnōn* ('times of the Gentiles') introduces a mysterious period of Gentile domination over Jerusalem with a definite end (*achri hou*, 'until'). This implies eventual restoration, but the timeline is deliberately unspecified.
- 25.** The discourse shifts from Jerusalem's destruction to cosmic upheaval, drawing on prophetic imagery from Isaiah 13:10, Joel 2:30-31, and Amos 8:9. Whether these cosmic signs are literal or metaphorical for political upheaval is debated — in Old Testament prophetic literature, cosmic language often describes the fall of political powers (cf. Isaiah 13:10 about Babylon, Ezekiel 32:7 about Egypt). The word *synochē* ('distress, anguish, constriction') suggests a tightening, suffocating fear. The *aporia* ('bewilderment, perplexity, helplessness') adds cognitive paralysis to the emotional distress.
- 25.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Isaiah 13:10 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 25.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Joel 2:30-31 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 25.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Amos 8:9 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 25.** [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Ezekiel 32:7 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
- 26.** The verb *apopsychontōn* ('fainting, breathing out, expiring from fear') is unique to the New Testament — literally 'breathing away,' suggesting people will be so terrified they lose consciousness or die of fright. The *oikoumenē* ('inhabited world') is the entire civilized world, not merely Judea. The *dynameis tōn ouranōn* ('powers of the heavens') may refer to celestial bodies (sun, moon, stars as cosmic forces), angelic powers, or both — the shaking (*saleuthēsontai*) of these powers represents the dissolution of the created order itself.
- 27.** This alludes directly to Daniel 7:13-14, where 'one like a son of man' comes 'with the clouds of heaven' to receive dominion from the Ancient of Days. Luke uses the singular *nephelē* ('a cloud,' not 'clouds'), emphasizing the theophanic quality — in the Old Testament, the cloud is associated with God's presence (Exodus 13:21, 40:34). The combination of *dynamis* ('power') and *doxa* ('glory') marks this as a divine appearance. The verb *opsontai* ('they will see') indicates universal visibility — this is not a secret or spiritual event.
- 27.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Daniel 7:13-14. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 27.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 13:21. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
- 28.** While the world faints from terror (v. 26), the disciples are told to stand up (*anakypsate*, 'straighten up, look up with confidence') and raise their heads (*eparate tas kephalas*, 'lift your heads') — postures of hope, not fear. The word *apolytrōsis* ('redemption, liberation, ransom') is a commercial term for buying a slave's freedom. The same events that terrify the world signal liberation for believers. This verse is the emotional heart of the discourse: the coming of the Son of Man is not a threat but a rescue.

- 29.** Luke adds 'and all the trees' (kai panta ta dendra) to Mark's 'fig tree,' universalizing the analogy — any deciduous tree demonstrates the same principle. In Palestine, the fig tree's leaf cycle was a particularly reliable seasonal marker because it was one of the last trees to leaf out in spring.
- 30.** The verb probalōsin ('put forth, sprout') refers to the visible budding of leaves. The phrase aph' heautōn ('from yourselves, on your own') emphasizes that this is observable common sense — no special revelation is needed. The analogy is simple: just as natural signs indicate coming seasons, the events described in this discourse will indicate the coming of the kingdom.
- 31.** Luke has 'the kingdom of God' (hē basileia tou theou) where Mark 13:29 has simply 'he is near' or 'it is near' — Luke makes the referent explicit. The signs described in this discourse do not predict the kingdom's arrival but signal its proximity. The present imperative ginōskete ('know, recognize') demands ongoing awareness.
- 32.** The phrase hē genea hautē ('this generation') is among the most debated expressions in the Gospels. It could mean: (1) Jesus's contemporaries (fulfilled if 'all these things' refers to AD 70), (2) the generation alive when the signs begin (making it future-referential), (3) 'this kind of people' (the faithless generation, making it a moral category). The double negative ou mē ('certainly not, by no means') expresses absolute certainty. We render the Greek literally and leave the interpretive question to the reader.
- 33.** The claim is extraordinary: the most permanent things in human experience — heaven and earth — are declared temporary, while Jesus's words are declared eternal. The same verb pareusetai ('will pass away') is used for both, creating a direct contrast. This is an implicit claim to divine authority — only God's word endures forever (Isaiah 40:8). Jesus places his own words on par with the word of God.
- 33.** [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 40:8 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
- 34.** The warnings are uniquely Lukan. The verb barēthōsin ('be weighed down, be made heavy') echoes the Gethsemane scene (22:45, where the disciples are 'weighed down with grief'). Three dangers are listed: kraipale ('carousing, hangover, dissipation'), methē ('drunkenness'), and merimnais biōtikais ('worries of daily life, anxieties about livelihood'). The third is as dangerous as the first two — ordinary anxieties can dull spiritual alertness as effectively as excess.
- 35.** The word pagis ('trap, snare') describes something that springs shut suddenly and inescapably. The scope is universal: epi pantas tous kathēmenous epi prosōpon pasēs tēs gēs ('upon all who sit/dwell upon the face of all the earth'). No one is exempt. The imagery connects to the Noah and Lot comparisons of 17:26-30 — the day catches people in the midst of ordinary life.
- 36.** The verb agrypneite ('stay awake, be vigilant, be sleepless') is stronger than the usual grēgoreite ('watch') — it implies a state of constant wakefulness. The verb katischysēte ('have strength, prevail, be able') emphasizes that escaping the coming tribulations and standing before the Son of Man requires divine empowerment obtained through prayer. The goal is dual: ekphygein ('to escape') the coming calamities and stathēnai ('to stand') — to be found standing rather than fallen when the Son of Man appears. This verse bookends the discourse with verse 8's opening warning: the proper response to eschatological expectation is not calculation but prayer.
- 37.** This summary verse establishes Jesus's routine during his final week: temple teaching by day, withdrawal to the Mount of Olives by night. The verb ēlizeto ('lodged, spent the night, bivouacked') suggests sleeping outdoors rather than in a house — possibly at the garden of Gethsemane on the olive-tree-covered hillside. This pattern explains how Judas knew where to find Jesus at night (22:39).
- 38.** The verb ōrthrizen ('came early, rose at dawn') indicates the people's eagerness — they arrived at the temple at first light to hear Jesus teach. This popular devotion explains the authorities' dilemma (19:47-48, 20:19): the people's intense attachment to Jesus makes a public arrest politically impossible, forcing the leaders to seek a covert opportunity, which Judas will provide.

22

Summary: *Luke 22 narrates the final hours before Jesus's arrest: Judas's conspiracy with the chief priests, preparations for the Passover meal, the institution of the Lord's Supper, the dispute about greatness among the disciples, the prediction of Peter's denial, the agony in Gethsemane, the arrest, Peter's denial, the mocking and beating of Jesus, and his appearance before the Sanhedrin at dawn. This is the longest chapter in Luke and the most theologically dense, encompassing the transition from ministry to passion.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke's Last Supper account contains unique material not found in the other Gospels: the dispute about greatness occurring during the meal (not earlier as in Mark/Matthew), Jesus's declaration that he has earnestly desired to eat this Passover, the two-cup structure, and the extended farewell discourse. The Gethsemane account includes the textually disputed verses 43-44 (the angel strengthening Jesus and his sweat becoming like drops of blood), which are among the most famous textual variants in the New Testament. Luke alone records Jesus healing the ear of the high priest's servant during the arrest.*

Translation Friction: Verses 43-44 (the strengthening angel and the bloody sweat) are absent from important early manuscripts (P75, Aleph, A, B, T, W) but present in others (Aleph-2, D, L, Theta, family 13, and most Byzantine manuscripts). Their authenticity is disputed. We include them following the SBLGNT's double-bracketed text but note the manuscript evidence. The two-cup structure (vv. 17-18 and v. 20) is debated — some scholars see it as a Passover seder with its multiple cups, while others view it as a textual issue.*

Connections: The Passover setting connects to Exodus 12 (the original Passover). The words of institution ('this is my body... this cup is the new covenant in my blood') connect to Jeremiah 31:31-34 (the new covenant promise) and Exodus 24:8 (the blood of the covenant). Peter's denial fulfills Jesus's prediction. The Sanhedrin trial fulfills the passion predictions of 9:22, 18:31-33. Jesus's prayer in Gethsemane connects to the Lord's Prayer (11:2-4) and the teaching on persistent prayer (18:1-8).

¹Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching. ²The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put him to death, for they feared the people. ³Then Satan entered into Judas, the one called Iscariot, who was numbered among the Twelve. ⁴He went and discussed with the chief priests and temple officers how he might hand Jesus over to them. ⁵They were delighted and agreed to give him money. ⁶He agreed and began looking for an opportunity to hand him over to them when no crowd was present. ⁷Then the day of Unleavened Bread came, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it." ⁹They asked him, "Where do you want us to prepare it?" ¹⁰He said to them, "When you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house he enters, ¹¹You will say to the goodman of the house, The Master says to you, Where is the guestchamber, where I will eat the passover with my followers? ¹²He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations there." ¹³They went and found everything just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover. ¹⁴When the hour came, he reclined at the table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves. ¹⁸For I tell you, from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹Then he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰In the same way, after the meal he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. ²¹But look — the hand of the one who betrays me is with me on the table. ²²For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!" ²³They began to question among themselves which of them it could be who was going to do this. ²⁴A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered the greatest. ²⁵He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in authority over them are called 'Benefactors.' ²⁶But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should become like the youngest, and the leader like the one who serves. ²⁷For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one reclining? Yet I am among you as the one who serves. ²⁸You are those who have stood by me in my trials. ²⁹And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, ³⁰And sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, and that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom. ³¹"Simon, Simon, look — Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat. ³²But I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." ³³Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death." ³⁴Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today before you have denied three times that you know me." ³⁵Then he said to them, "When I sent you out without a money bag, a traveler's bag, or sandals, did you lack anything?" They said, "Nothing." ³⁶He said to them, "But now, the one who has a money bag should take it, and likewise a traveler's bag. And the one who has no sword should sell his cloak and buy one. ³⁷For I tell you, this scripture must be fulfilled in me: 'And he was counted among the lawless.' Indeed, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment." ³⁸They said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." He said to them, "It is enough." ³⁹He went out and made his way to the Mount of Olives, as was his custom, and the disciples followed him. ⁴⁰When he arrived at the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." ⁴¹He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, ⁴²"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me. Yet not my will but yours be done." ⁴³An angel from heaven appeared to him,

strengthening him. ⁴⁴And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground. ⁴⁵When he rose from prayer and went to the disciples, he found them sleeping from grief. ⁴⁶He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray, so that you will not fall into temptation." ⁴⁷While he was still speaking, a crowd appeared, and the one called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, ⁴⁸However, Jesus stated to him, Judas, betrayest you the Son of Man with a kiss? ⁴⁹When those around him saw what was about to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?" ⁵⁰And one of them struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹But Jesus responded, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him. ⁵²Then Jesus said to the chief priests, temple officers, and elders who had come for him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as if against a revolutionary? ⁵³When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour — and the power of darkness." ⁵⁴They seized him and led him away, bringing him to the high priest's house. Peter was following at a distance. ⁵⁵When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. ⁵⁶A servant girl saw him sitting in the firelight and, staring at him, said, "This man was with him too." ⁵⁷But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." ⁵⁸A little later, someone else saw him and said, "You are one of them too." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." ⁵⁹About an hour later, another person insisted, saying, "Certainly this man was with him too, for he is a Galilean." ⁶⁰Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹The Lord turned and looked at Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had told him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." ⁶²And he went outside and wept bitterly. ⁶³The men who were holding Jesus in custody began mocking and beating him. ⁶⁴They blindfolded him and kept asking, "Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?" ⁶⁵And they said many other blasphemous things against him. ⁶⁶When day came, the council of the elders of the people assembled — both chief priests and scribes — and they led him before their Sanhedrin. ⁶⁷Art you the Christ? tell us. Then he stated to them, If I tell you, you will not trust:. ⁶⁸If I as well ask you, you will not answer me, nor let me depart. ⁶⁹But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." ⁷⁰They all said, "Are you then the Son of God?" He said to them, "You say that I am." ⁷¹They said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own mouth."

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. Technically, the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread were distinct celebrations (Passover on Nisan 14, Unleavened Bread from Nisan 15-21), but by the first century, the terms were used interchangeably in popular speech. Luke's phrase *hē legomenē pascha* ('which is called Passover') reflects this common usage. The imperfect *ēngizen* ('was approaching') creates narrative tension — the reader knows what the festival will bring.
2. The imperfect *ežētoun* ('they were seeking') indicates ongoing, frustrated plotting. The verb *anelōsin* ('to destroy, to kill, to do away with') is a euphemism for execution. Their fear of the people (*ephobounts ton laon*) has been the obstacle since 19:47-48 and 20:19. What changes the equation is Judas's offer in the next verses.
3. Luke and John (13:27) are the only Gospels that attribute Judas's betrayal to Satan's direct intervention. Luke last mentioned Satan in 4:13, where the devil departed from Jesus 'until an opportune time' (*achri kairou*) — this is that opportune time. The epithet 'Iscariot' (*Iskariōtēn*) may mean 'man of Keriōth' (a Judean town) or may derive from the Latin *sicarius* ('dagger-man, assassin'). The phrase *onta ek tou arithmou tōn dōdeka* ('being from the number of the twelve') underscores the horror: the betrayer comes from within the innermost circle.
4. Luke uniquely includes *stratēgois* ('temple officers, captains of the temple guard'), the security force that controlled the temple precincts. Their involvement is practical — any arrest in or near the temple would require their cooperation. The verb *paradō* ('hand over, betray') is the same word used for Jesus being 'handed over' to the Gentiles (18:32) and for God 'handing over' his Son — the word carries multiple theological layers.
5. The verb *echarēsān* ('they rejoiced, were delighted') reveals the authorities' emotional state — they are pleased to have found their solution. The verb *synthēto* ('they agreed, covenanted together') is a formal term for making an agreement. Luke does not specify the amount (Matthew 26:15 names 'thirty pieces of silver'). The word *argyriōn* ('silver, money') is generic.
6. The verb *exōmologēsēn* ('he consented, agreed, confessed') here means 'he assented to the arrangement.' The phrase *ater ochlou* ('without a crowd, in the absence of the multitude') is the crucial tactical detail — Judas's value to the authorities is his ability to deliver Jesus at a time and place where public reaction cannot interfere. This solves the problem identified in 19:48, 20:19, and 22:2.
7. The phrase *edei thyesthai to pascha* ('it was necessary to sacrifice the Passover') refers to the afternoon of Nisan 14, when the Passover lambs were slaughtered in the temple. The verb *dei* ('it was necessary') indicates Torah requirement (Exodus 12:6). The chronological relationship between Luke's account and John's (where Jesus dies at the hour the lambs are slaughtered) is a well-known harmonization challenge that we do not attempt to resolve.

7. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Exodus 12:6. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
8. Luke alone names the two disciples sent — Peter and John, the inner circle. Preparing the Passover involved acquiring a lamb, having it sacrificed at the temple, roasting it, and preparing the accompanying elements (unleavened bread, bitter herbs, wine, charoset). This was a substantial task requiring several hours.
9. The question is practical — Jerusalem would have been packed with pilgrims for the festival, and securing a suitable room for the meal was not trivial. The subjunctive *hetoimasōmen* ('should we prepare') expresses deference to Jesus's choice.
10. A man carrying a *keramion* ('earthenware jar') of water would have been conspicuous — water-carrying was typically women's work, and men used leather skins rather than clay jars. This detail would make the man easy to identify in a crowded city. Whether this was a prearranged signal or prophetic knowledge is debated; Luke's narrative implies the latter.
11. The title *ho didaskalos* ('the Teacher') functions as a recognized identifier, suggesting an existing relationship between Jesus and the homeowner. The word *katalyma* ('guest room, lodging place') is the same word used for the place where there was 'no room' at Jesus's birth (2:7) — creating a subtle literary connection between the beginning and end of Luke's narrative.
12. The *anagaion* ('upper room') was a second-story room, typically the best room in the house, used for important gatherings. The participle *estrōmenon* ('furnished, spread out, arranged') indicates the room already has the necessary carpets, cushions, and dining arrangements for a Passover meal. This level of preparation suggests prior arrangement.
13. The phrase *kathōs eirēkei autois* ('just as he had told them') echoes the preparation for the triumphal entry (19:32) — the same pattern of prophetic instruction followed by exact fulfillment. The verb *hetoimasan* ('they prepared') covers the extensive work of Passover preparation, compressed into a single word.
14. The phrase *hē hōra* ('the hour') carries theological weight beyond mere clock time — this is the appointed hour, the *kairos* toward which the entire Gospel has been moving. The verb *anepesen* ('he reclined') describes the dining posture: reclining on the left side on cushions around a low table, the standard practice for formal meals and required for the Passover seder. Luke uses 'apostles' (*apostoloi*) rather than 'disciples,' emphasizing their commissioned role.
15. The phrase *epithymia epethymēsa* ('with desire I have desired') is a Semitic intensifying construction (cognate accusative) that expresses the deepest possible longing. This statement is unique to Luke and reveals Jesus's emotional state — he has longed for this meal. The phrase *pro tou me pathēin* ('before I suffer') shows Jesus's full awareness of what lies ahead.
16. The double negative *ou mē* ('I will by no means eat') is emphatic — this is Jesus's last Passover. The word *plērōthē* ('is fulfilled, completed') implies that the Passover itself is a type that points forward to a greater reality to be consummated in the kingdom. The Passover lamb, the exodus from Egypt, the covenant meal — all find their fulfillment in what Jesus is about to accomplish through his death.
17. This is the first of two cups in Luke's account (the second appears in v. 20). The Passover seder traditionally included four cups of wine. This first cup likely corresponds to one of the earlier seder cups. The verb *eucharistēsas* ('having given thanks') is the root of 'Eucharist' and refers to the Jewish blessing over wine (likely the *kiddush*: 'Blessed are you, LORD our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine').
18. The phrase *genēmatos tēs ampelou* ('fruit of the vine') is the traditional liturgical term for wine in Jewish blessings. The eschatological vow — not drinking wine until the kingdom comes — mirrors the Nazirite vow's abstinence from wine as a sign of consecration. Jesus consecrates himself for his coming sacrifice. The phrase 'until the kingdom of God comes' (*heōs hou hē basileia tou theou elthē*) holds the future open — this is not the end of fellowship but a temporary suspension until its consummation.
19. The four actions — took (*labōn*), gave thanks (*eucharistēsas*), broke (*eklasen*), gave (*edōken*) — become the foundational pattern of Christian worship. The phrase *to hyper hymōn didomenon* ('which is being given for you') uses the present participle, indicating an ongoing action — Jesus's body is being given in the very act of the meal. The command *touto poieite eis tēn emēn anamnēsin* ('do this in remembrance of me') establishes the meal as a repeated memorial. The word *anamnēsis* ('remembrance, memorial') in Jewish thought means not merely mental recall but active re-presentation — making the past event present again.
20. The phrase *meta to deipnēsai* ('after having eaten the meal') places this second cup after the main course, likely corresponding to the third cup of the Passover seder (the 'cup of blessing,' cf. 1 Corinthians 10:16). The phrase *hē kainē diathēkē* ('the new covenant') explicitly invokes Jeremiah 31:31-34, the only Old Testament passage that uses 'new covenant.' The *diathēkē* ('covenant, testament') is not a contract between equals but God's sovereign arrangement. The phrase *en tō haimati mou* ('in my blood') echoes Exodus 24:8 ('This is the blood of the covenant'), where Moses sealed the Sinai covenant with sacrificial blood.
20. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
20. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 24:8 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
21. In Luke's arrangement (unlike Matthew and Mark), the betrayal announcement comes after the institution of the supper, not before. This means Judas participates in the covenant meal, intensifying the horror of the betrayal. The phrase *hē cheir tou paradidontos me* ('the hand of the one handing me over') places the betraying hand literally on the same table where Jesus has just given his body and blood. Psalm 41:9 (quoted in John 13:18) provides the background: 'Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.'

21. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Psalm 41:9. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
22. The phrase *kata to hōrismenon* ('according to what has been determined, decreed') uses the same root as *horizō* ('to fix, to decree, to appoint'), which Luke uses elsewhere for God's sovereign plan (Acts 2:23, 10:42, 17:26, 31). The tension between divine determination and human responsibility is held without resolution: the Son of Man's death is God's plan (*kata to hōrismenon*), yet the betrayer bears full moral culpability (*ouai*). Luke does not collapse either side of this tension.
23. The verb *syzētein* ('to discuss, to dispute, to investigate') indicates animated debate rather than quiet reflection. The optative *eiē* ('might be') expresses uncertainty and speculation. Their inability to identify the betrayer reveals both their self-awareness (each apparently considers himself capable) and their ignorance (no one suspects Judas specifically).
24. The word *philoneikia* ('rivalry, love of strife, contentiousness') appears only here in the New Testament. The timing is staggering — at the very meal where Jesus gives his body and blood and announces his betrayal, the disciples argue about rank. In Mark and Matthew, this dispute occurs earlier in the ministry; Luke's placement at the Last Supper maximizes the contrast between Jesus's self-giving and the disciples' self-seeking.
25. The verb *kyrieuousin* ('exercise lordship, dominate') describes coercive, top-down power. The title *euergetai* ('Benefactors') was an actual honorific title given to Hellenistic rulers — Ptolemy III and VIII of Egypt were both called 'Euergetes.' The irony: those who dominate are called 'benefactors,' wrapping exploitation in the language of generosity. Jesus exposes the fundamental dishonesty of power structures.
26. The 'youngest' (*neōteros*) held the lowest status in ancient households — they served the eldest. The 'one who serves' (*ho diakonōn*) is literally 'the one who waits tables.' Jesus inverts the hierarchy completely: greatness is defined by service, leadership by the willingness to take the lowest position. The word *diakonōn* is the root of 'deacon,' later institutionalized as a church office.
27. Jesus asks a question with an obvious cultural answer — the one reclining is always greater than the one serving — and then claims the server's role for himself. The phrase *egō de en mesō hymōn eimi hōs ho diakonōn* ('I am among you as the one serving') is the most radical leadership statement in the Gospels. The present tense *eimi* ('I am') makes this a permanent identity, not a temporary condescension. John's Gospel dramatizes this with the foot-washing scene (John 13:1-17).
28. The perfect participle *diamemenēkotes* ('having remained throughout, having continued steadfastly') acknowledges the disciples' loyalty despite everything. The word *peiramois* ('trials, testings, temptations') encompasses the full range of opposition Jesus has faced. Despite their failures (which will become more apparent in the hours ahead), Jesus credits them with faithfulness.
29. The verb *diatithemai* ('I confer, I covenant, I bequeath') is related to *diathēkē* ('covenant') — Jesus is making a covenant grant of royal authority. The chain of conferral runs from the Father to Jesus to the disciples, establishing a succession of delegated authority. This is a testamentary act — the last will of someone about to die.
30. The promise has two dimensions: table fellowship (eating and drinking with Jesus) and governmental authority (sitting on thrones judging the tribes). The verb *krinontes* ('judging') echoes the judges of Israel who both governed and adjudicated. The 'twelve tribes' indicates the restoration of all Israel, not merely the existing southern tribes. This promise is given to the same men who moments ago were arguing about rank — Jesus answers their ambition with a grant that far exceeds anything they imagined.
31. The double name 'Simon, Simon' (*Simōn Simōn*) signals urgency and tenderness. The verb *exētēsato* ('demanded, asked for, claimed') echoes Job 1-2, where Satan requests permission to test Job. The 'you' (*hymas*) is plural — Satan targets all the disciples, not Peter alone. The sifting metaphor (*siniasai*, 'to sift') describes violent shaking to separate grain from chaff; the trials ahead will expose what each disciple is truly made of.
31. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Job 1-2. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
32. The 'you' (*sou*) switches to singular — Jesus prays specifically for Peter. The verb *edeēthēn* ('I have prayed, I have besought') is an aorist indicating a specific, completed prayer. The phrase *eklipē hē pīstis sou* ('your faith might fail, give out, be eclipsed') uses a word that means to cease or be extinguished — like a lamp going out. The verb *epistrepsas* ('having turned back, having returned') acknowledges that Peter will fall but also promises restoration. The command *stērison* ('strengthen, establish, make firm') gives Peter a post-failure ministry: his own recovery becomes the basis for strengthening others.
33. Peter's declaration is sincere but overconfident. He offers willingness for the extreme scenarios (prison and death) but will stumble at a far lesser test (a servant girl's question). Luke places Peter's boast in the context of the Last Supper discourse rather than on the Mount of Olives (as in Mark 14:29-31), integrating it into the farewell conversation.
34. Jesus uses Peter's apostolic name (*Petre*) rather than 'Simon,' sharpening the personal address. The specificity is devastating: not merely a general prediction of failure but a precise count (three denials), a precise timeframe (before the rooster crows), and a precise content (denying that he knows Jesus). Luke adds *eidenai* ('to know me'), specifying that Peter will deny the relationship itself, not just association.
35. Jesus refers back to the mission of the seventy-two (10:1-12), where he sent them out with no provisions and they lacked nothing. The three items — *ballantion* ('money bag'), *pēra* ('traveler's bag, knapsack'), and *hypodēmata* ('sandals') — represent financial resources, food supplies, and basic equipment. Their unanimous answer 'Nothing' (*outhenos*) confirms that divine provision was sufficient during the earlier, more receptive phase of ministry.

36. The phrase *alla nyn* ('but now') marks a dramatic shift in circumstances. The earlier instructions (travel without provisions) are reversed — the time of hospitality and reception is over; a time of hostility and self-provision has arrived. The instruction to sell one's himation ('outer cloak,' essential for warmth and sleeping) to buy a machaira ('sword, large knife') is startling. Whether Jesus speaks literally (prepare for danger) or figuratively (the situation has become dire) is debated. The next verses suggest the disciples take it literally and Jesus corrects them.
37. Jesus quotes Isaiah 53:12 ('he was numbered with the transgressors'), the fourth Servant Song. The word *anomōn* ('lawless ones, transgressors') foreshadows his crucifixion between two criminals (23:32-33). The phrase *to peri emou telos echei* ('what concerns me has its end/completion') can mean either 'is being fulfilled' or 'is coming to its conclusion.' Luke's Jesus frames his death as the fulfillment of Isaiah's suffering servant prophecy — the only explicit quotation of Isaiah 53 by Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels.
37. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 53:12. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
38. The disciples take Jesus's words literally and produce two swords. Jesus's response *hikanon estin* ('it is enough') is often read as weary dismissal: 'Enough of this' — they have missed his point entirely. Two swords would be militarily useless against a Roman cohort; Jesus was not calling for armed resistance. Alternatively, 'it is enough' may mean two swords suffice to fulfill the prophecy of being 'counted among the lawless' (v. 37) — mere possession of weapons classifies them as armed rebels.
39. The phrase *kata to ethos* ('according to custom, as was his habit') connects to 21:37 — Jesus regularly spent nights on the Mount of Olives. This habitual pattern is what enabled Judas to know where to find him (v. 47). Luke does not name Gethsemane (as Mark and Matthew do) but simply refers to the Mount of Olives.
40. The phrase *epi tou topou* ('at the place') is vague in Luke — no garden is named. The command *proseuchē* the *mē eiselthein eis peirasmon* ('pray not to enter into temptation/testing') echoes the Lord's Prayer (11:4) and frames what follows: the disciples' failure to pray will lead to their failure in the testing. The *peirasmos* ('temptation, trial, testing') refers specifically to the crisis of Jesus's arrest and death.
41. The verb *apespasthē* ('he was torn away, he withdrew') carries the connotation of painful separation — the passive voice may suggest reluctance. The distance 'about a stone's throw' (*hōsei lithou bolēn*) is roughly 50-100 feet — close enough to be seen but far enough for privacy. Kneeling (*theis ta gonata*, 'placing the knees') was not the usual Jewish prayer posture (standing with uplifted hands was standard), suggesting intense supplication.
42. Luke's version of the prayer is more concise than Mark's. The address 'Father' (*Pater*) without 'Abba' (which Mark includes) still conveys intimate filial relationship. The 'cup' (*potērion*) is a biblical metaphor for suffering and divine judgment (Psalm 75:8, Isaiah 51:17, Jeremiah 25:15). The conditional *ei boulei* ('if you are willing') respects the Father's sovereignty. The concluding *mē to thelēma mou alla to son ginesthō* ('not my will but yours be done') is the model of perfect submission — the same petition Jesus taught in the Lord's Prayer (11:2, 'your will be done') now enacted at infinite personal cost.
42. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Psalm 75:8. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
42. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 51:17. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
42. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Jeremiah 25:15. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
43. TEXTUAL NOTE: This verse and the next (v. 44) are absent from several important early manuscripts (P75, Codex Vaticanus, the original hand of Codex Sinaiticus) but present in others (the corrected Sinaiticus, Codex Bezae, and most later manuscripts). The SBLGNT places them in double brackets, indicating their disputed status. If original, they are unique to Luke and present a portrait of Jesus's genuine human vulnerability — the Son of God needs angelic strengthening. If later additions, they reflect early Christian reflection on Jesus's humanity. We include them but note the evidence. The verb *enischyōn* ('strengthening') implies giving power to endure rather than removing the cause of distress.
44. TEXTUAL NOTE: See note on verse 43 regarding the disputed status of this verse. The word *agōnia* ('agony, anguish, intense struggle') is a contest metaphor — it describes the strain of an athlete in the arena. The comparative *ektenesteron* ('more earnestly, more intensely') shows prayer escalating under pressure. The phrase *hōsei thromboi haimatos* ('like clots/drops of blood') uses *hōsei* ('as if, like'), indicating a comparison — Luke says the sweat resembled blood drops in appearance (thick, heavy drops), not necessarily that it was blood. The medical condition *hematidrosis* (sweat mixed with blood under extreme stress) is rare but documented.
45. Luke compresses Mark's three prayer episodes into one and offers an explanation for the disciples' sleep: *apo tēs lypēs* ('from grief, because of sorrow'). This is a compassionate detail unique to Luke — they are not merely indifferent but emotionally overwhelmed. Their grief, however, does not excuse their failure to pray.
46. Jesus's rebuke forms a bracket with verse 40 — the same command to pray against temptation opens and closes the Gethsemane scene. The question *ti katheudete* ('why are you sleeping?') is not merely rhetorical; it expresses genuine anguish that at the hour of greatest need, his closest companions have failed to keep watch. The imperative *anastantes proseuchesthe* ('having risen, pray!') demands immediate action.
47. The phrase *eti autou lalountos* ('while he was still speaking') emphasizes the abruptness — there is no pause between the prayer and the arrest. Judas is again identified as *heis tōn dōdeka* ('one of the Twelve'), a phrase that never loses its shock. The verb *philēsai* ('to kiss') refers to the standard greeting kiss between rabbi and disciple — Judas weaponizes a gesture of loyalty and affection. He *proērchetō* ('was going before, was

leading') the crowd, placing himself at the head of the arrest party.

- 48.** Jesus addresses Judas by name and exposes the horrifying irony: the gesture of devotion (philēmati, 'with a kiss') is the instrument of betrayal (paradidōs, 'you are handing over'). The question form allows Judas one final moment of self-awareness — Jesus does not merely accuse but invites recognition of what he is doing. The title 'Son of Man' frames the betrayal in its full cosmic significance.
- 49.** The phrase hoi peri auton ('those around him') refers to the disciples. Their question is addressed to kyrie ('Lord') and shows they are prepared to fight — the two swords from verse 38 are at hand. The question pataxomen en machairē ('shall we strike with a sword?') uses the same verb (patassō) used in the Septuagint for the LORD striking Egypt with plagues (Exodus 12:12).
- 49.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 12:12. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
- 50.** Luke does not name the attacker (John 18:10 identifies him as Peter) or the victim (John 18:10 names him Malchus). The detail 'right ear' (to ous autou to dexion) is shared with John and adds realistic specificity. The verb apeilen ('cut off, removed') indicates a clean severing. The disciple acts without waiting for Jesus's answer to the question in verse 49.
- 51.** The phrase eate heōs toutou ('permit until this point' or 'stop, that is enough') ends the violence. Jesus's healing of the servant's ear is unique to Luke and is his last recorded miracle — an act of mercy toward his enemy during his own arrest. The verb iasato ('he healed') indicates complete restoration. The juxtaposition of a disciple causing harm and Jesus healing it encapsulates the contrast between their understanding of the mission and his.
- 52.** Luke uniquely specifies that the chief priests, temple officers, and elders themselves are present at the arrest — in Mark, they send subordinates. The word lēstēs ('bandit, revolutionary, insurrectionist') is the same word used for the men crucified with Jesus (Mark 15:27) and for Barabbas's associates. It carries political overtones of armed rebellion. Jesus's question exposes the absurdity: he taught openly in the temple every day (v. 53) and could have been confronted at any time.
- 53.** The final phrase is unique to Luke and theologically profound: hautē estin hymōn hē hōra kai hē exousia tou skotous ('this is your hour and the authority of darkness'). Jesus concedes that this specific hour belongs to his enemies and to the cosmic power of darkness (skotous) behind them. The word exousia ('authority, power, right') indicates that darkness has been given temporary jurisdiction — not by its own power but by divine permission (cf. v. 53's connection to v. 22's 'as it has been determined'). This is not defeat but a controlled yielding.
- 54.** The verbs syllabontes ('having seized'), ēgagon ('they led'), and eisēgagon ('they brought into') mark the progression from arrest to custody. Luke does not name the high priest (Caiaphas, according to Matthew 26:57). Peter's following makrothen ('from a distance') is an ominous detail — close enough to be tested, far enough to be alone. The imperfect ēkolouthei ('was following') indicates ongoing, hesitant pursuit.
- 55.** The aulē ('courtyard') was the open-air interior space of the high priest's residence. The fire (pyr) provides both warmth (it was a spring night in Jerusalem, which can be cold) and light — the light that will illuminate Peter's face and lead to his identification. Peter sits mesos autōn ('in the middle of them'), surrounded by those loyal to the high priest. The setting is claustrophobic and dangerous.
- 56.** The paidiskē ('servant girl, maid') holds no social power whatever — Peter, who declared readiness for prison and death (v. 33), is undone by the lowest-ranking person in the household. The verb atenisasa ('having fixed her gaze, having stared intently') indicates she studied his face carefully. The phrase syn autō ēn ('was with him') identifies Peter as a follower of Jesus.
- 57.** The verb ērnēsato ('he denied') is the verb Jesus used in his prediction (v. 34). Peter denies knowing Jesus (ouk oida auton, 'I do not know him'), fulfilling the specific content predicted. The address gynai ('woman') is not disrespectful in Greek (Jesus uses it for his mother in John 2:4) but is dismissive in this context.
- 58.** The second accuser is male (heteros, masculine), providing a different source for the identification. The accusation ex autōn ei ('you are of them') identifies Peter as belonging to Jesus's group. Peter's denial ouk eimi ('I am not') is a stark inversion of Jesus's egō eimi ('I am') declarations. Each denial drives Peter further from his declared identity.
- 59.** The interval hōsei hōras mias ('about one hour') makes the third denial deliberate rather than impulsive. The verb diischyrizeto ('insisted, affirmed confidently, maintained vehemently') is a strong word — this accuser is certain. The evidence is Peter's accent: kai gar Galilaios estin ('for he is indeed a Galilean'). Galilean Aramaic had distinctive pronunciation features that were recognizable in Jerusalem.
- 60.** Peter's final denial is not merely 'I don't know him' but 'I don't know what you're talking about' — he denies understanding the accusation itself. The phrase parachrēma eti lalountos autou ('immediately while he was still speaking') means the rooster crows before Peter finishes his sentence — the prediction is fulfilled with devastating precision.
- 61.** This detail — the Lord turning and looking at Peter (strapheis ho kyrios eneblepsen tō Petrō) — is unique to Luke and is one of the most poignant moments in the Gospels. The verb eneblepsen ('looked intently at') is the same word used in 20:17 when Jesus 'looked directly at' the religious leaders. The look carries no recorded words — only the gaze that Peter must have remembered for the rest of his life. Jesus is apparently being led through the courtyard, making eye contact possible. The title ho kyrios ('the Lord') emphasizes the contrast: the Lord remembers and watches; Peter forgot and failed.
- 62.** The verb eklausen ('he wept') indicates audible sobbing (the same word used for Jesus weeping over Jerusalem in 19:41). The adverb pikrōs ('bitterly') describes the quality of the tears — not merely sad but acutely painful. Peter leaves the courtyard (exelthōn exō, 'going out outside'), removing himself from the scene of his failure. This is the last we see of Peter in Luke's passion narrative until the empty tomb report reaches him (24:12).

63. The verb *synechontes* ('holding, guarding, keeping in custody') identifies the abusers as the guards. The verbs *enepaizon* ('were mocking, were ridiculing') and *derontes* ('beating, striking, flogging') describe sustained physical abuse and humiliation. In Luke, this abuse occurs before the trial (unlike Mark, where it follows the trial), placing it during the night while Peter's denial is still reverberating.
64. The verb *perikalypsantes* ('having covered around, having blindfolded') sets up the cruel game: they blindfold Jesus and then demand he identify who strikes him, mocking his prophetic claims. The imperative *prophēteuson* ('prophesy!') is deeply ironic — at this very moment, Jesus's prophecy about Peter's denial has just been fulfilled with exact precision. The guards mock a prophetic ability they do not realize has been demonstrated.
65. The verb *blasphēmountes* ('blaspheming, reviling') is notable — Luke uses 'blasphemy' for what the guards say to Jesus, a term the Sanhedrin will use against Jesus in verse 71. The irony is double: those who blaspheme accuse Jesus of blasphemy. The phrase *hetera polla* ('many other things') indicates the abuse was extensive and sustained.
66. Luke's trial before the Sanhedrin occurs at dawn (*hōs egeneto hēmera*, 'when it became day'), not during the night as in Mark. This may reflect Luke's knowledge of Jewish legal procedure, which prohibited capital trials at night. The *presbyterion* ('council of elders') is defined as consisting of *archiereis* ('chief priests') and *grammateis* ('scribes'). The *synedrion* ('Sanhedrin, council') was the supreme judicial body of Judaism.
67. The question *ei sy ei ho christos* ('if you are the Christ') demands a direct messianic claim. Jesus's response *ean hymin eipō ou mē pisteusēte* ('if I tell you, you will by no means believe') exposes their bad faith — they are not seeking truth but building a case. The double negative *ou mē* ('you will absolutely not believe') indicates Jesus's certainty about their disposition.
68. The second conditional extends the point: not only will they not believe his answer, they will not engage honestly with his questions. This recalls their refusal to answer his question about John's baptism (20:1-8). The trial is predetermined, not a genuine inquiry.
69. Jesus combines Daniel 7:13 (Son of Man) with Psalm 110:1 (seated at the right hand) — the two texts he brought together in 20:41-44. The phrase *apo tou nyn* ('from now on, henceforth') is a temporal marker unique to Luke, indicating that the exaltation begins immediately, not at some distant future point. The seated position (*kathēmenos*) is a position of completed authority. The circumlocution *tēs dynamēs tou theou* ('the power of God') avoids speaking God's name directly, as was customary.
69. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Daniel 7:13. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
69. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Psalm 110:1. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
70. The question shifts from 'Christ' (v. 67) to 'Son of God' (*huios tou theou*) — the council draws the theological implication from Jesus's claim about the Son of Man. Jesus's answer *hymeis legeite hoti egō eimi* ('you say that I am') is neither a direct affirmation nor a denial — it places the declaration in their mouths while not disowning it. The phrase *egō eimi* ('I am') echoes the divine name (Exodus 3:14), which the council would recognize.
70. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 3:14 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
71. The council declares that Jesus's own words constitute sufficient evidence (*martyrias*, 'testimony, witness') — no additional witnesses are needed. The phrase *apo tou stomatos autou* ('from his own mouth') emphasizes that Jesus has self-incriminated. Luke's trial account is more compact than Mark's — there are no false witnesses, no torn robes, no formal verdict of blasphemy. The council proceeds directly from Jesus's self-identification to the decision to bring him before Pilate (23:1). The speed of the proceedings underscores their predetermined outcome.

23

Summary: *Luke 23 narrates the Roman trial and crucifixion of Jesus. The chapter moves through the trial before Pilate, the hearing before Herod Antipas (unique to Luke), the crowd's demand for Barabbas, the way to the cross with Simon of Cyrene and the weeping women of Jerusalem, the crucifixion between two criminals, the mocking by rulers and soldiers, the repentant criminal's plea and Jesus's promise of paradise, the darkness and torn curtain, Jesus's death, and the burial by Joseph of Arimathea. Luke's crucifixion narrative emphasizes Jesus's innocence (declared three times by Pilate and once by Herod) and his mercy even in death.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Luke's passion narrative is distinguished by several unique elements: the Herod Antipas hearing, the weeping women of Jerusalem (with Jesus's prophecy about Jerusalem's coming destruction), the dialogue between the two criminals (with the promise 'Today you will be with me in paradise'), and the centurion's declaration that Jesus was 'righteous' (rather than Mark's 'Son of God'). The textually disputed verse 34a — 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing' — is one of the most famous sayings attributed to Jesus and epitomizes Luke's portrait of Jesus as merciful even to his executioners.*

Translation Friction: Verse 34a ('Father, forgive them...') is absent from P75, Sinaiticus (original), Vaticanus, and other early witnesses, but present in Sinaiticus (corrected), Bezae, and most later manuscripts. Its authenticity is disputed among scholars. We include it following the SBLGNT's double-bracketed text and note the manuscript evidence. The historical details of Roman crucifixion are rendered without sanitizing. Luke's account of Pilate's three declarations of innocence (vv. 4, 14, 22) creates a more sympathetic portrait of Pilate than other sources support.

Connections: The Barabbas exchange echoes the Day of Atonement scapegoat ritual (Leviticus 16). The darkness at the crucifixion echoes the plague of darkness in Exodus 10:22 and the prophetic warnings of Amos 8:9. The torn curtain connects to the theology of access to God (Hebrews 10:19-22). Jesus's final words ('Father, into your hands I commit my spirit') quote Psalm 31:5. Joseph of Arimathea's burial fulfills Isaiah 53:9 ('with the rich in his death'). The women at the cross connect to the women who will discover the empty tomb (24:1-10).

¹Then the whole assembly rose and led him before Pilate. ²They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation, forbidding the payment of taxes to Caesar, and claiming to be Christ, a king." ³Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered him, "You say so." ⁴Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no basis for a charge against this man." ⁵But they pressed their case more urgently, saying, "He stirs up the people with his teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee all the way here." ⁶When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. ⁷When he learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem during those days. ⁸When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign performed by him. ⁹He questioned him at considerable length, but Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰The chief priests and the scribes stood there, accusing him vehemently. ¹¹Herod, along with his soldiers, treated him with contempt and mocked him. Dressing him in an elegant robe, he sent him back to Pilate. ¹²That day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies. ¹³Pilate then called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people ¹⁴Said to them, you have brought this man to me, as one that perverteth the people — and, take notice, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof you accuse him. ¹⁵Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Clearly, he has done nothing deserving death. ¹⁶Therefore, I will have him flogged and then release him." ¹⁸But they all cried out together, "Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!" ¹⁹Barabbas had been thrown into prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city and for murder. ²⁰Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again. ²¹But they kept shouting, "Crucify! Crucify him!" ²²For the third time he said to them, "Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found no grounds for the death penalty in his case. Therefore I will have him flogged and release him." ²³But they were insistent, demanding with loud cries that he be crucified, and their voices prevailed. ²⁴So Pilate decided to grant their demand. ²⁵He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder — the one they asked for — but he handed Jesus over to their will. ²⁶As they led him away, they seized a man named Simon from Cyrene, who was coming in from the countryside, and placed the cross on him to carry behind Jesus. ²⁷A large crowd of the people followed him, including women who were mourning and wailing for him. ²⁸Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children, ²⁹For, take notice, the days are coming, in the which they will say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never offered suck. ³⁰Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' ³¹For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?" ³²Two other criminals were also led away with him to be executed. ³³When they came to the place called The Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals — one on his right, the other on his left. ³⁴Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided his garments among themselves by casting lots. ³⁵The people stood watching, and the rulers sneered at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One." ³⁶The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, ³⁷Declaring, If you be the king of the Jews, save thyself. ³⁸There was also an inscription above him: "This is the King of the Jews." ³⁹One of the criminals hanging there hurled insults at him, saying, "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹We are getting what we deserve for what we have done, but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴

²Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." ⁴³Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." ⁴⁴It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵The sun stopped shining, and the curtain of the temple was torn down the middle. ⁴⁶Then Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. ⁴⁷When the centurion saw what had happened, he praised God, saying, "Surely this man was righteous." ⁴⁸And all the crowds that had gathered for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, went home beating their chests. ⁴⁹All those who knew him stood at a distance, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, watching these things. ⁵⁰Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the council, a good and righteous man, ⁵¹Indeed, (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews — who also himself waited for God's reign. ⁵²This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³He took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and placed him in a rock-cut tomb where no one had yet been laid. ⁵⁴It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was about to begin. ⁵⁵The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was placed in it. ⁵⁶Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The phrase *hapan to plēthos autōn* ('the whole multitude of them') indicates a corporate decision by the full Sanhedrin. They bring Jesus to Pilate (Pontius Pilatus, Roman prefect of Judea, AD 26-36) because only the Roman governor had the authority to execute a death sentence (*ius gladii*). The transition from Jewish religious tribunal to Roman political court requires reframing the charges.
2. The charges are three, and all are political rather than religious: (1) *diastephonta to ethnos* ('misleading/perverting the nation') — sedition; (2) *kōlyonta phorous Kaisari didonai* ('forbidding taxes to Caesar') — a direct lie, since Jesus said the opposite in 20:25; (3) *legonta heauton christon basilea einai* ('claiming to be Christ, a king') — technically true but framed as a political claim against Caesar's sovereignty. The Sanhedrin transforms a religious charge (blasphemy) into a political one (treason) to engage Roman jurisdiction.
3. Pilate seizes on the only charge that matters to Rome: kingship. The question *sy ei ho basileus tōn Ioudaiōn* ('you are the king of the Jews?') is the charge that will appear on the cross (v. 38). Jesus's answer *sy legeis* ('you say so' or 'you are the one saying it') is identical in form to his answer before the Sanhedrin (22:70) — an acknowledgment that neither fully affirms nor denies, placing the characterization in the questioner's framework.
4. This is the first of Pilate's three declarations of Jesus's innocence (see also vv. 14 and 22). The phrase *ouden heuriskō aition* ('I find nothing blameworthy, no cause for accusation') is a formal legal verdict of acquittal. Despite this, Pilate does not release Jesus — the political pressure overrides the judicial finding. Luke's emphasis on Pilate's repeated acquittals serves his broader theme of Jesus's innocence.
5. The verb *epischyon* ('they were insistent, they pressed harder') shows escalating pressure. The verb *anaseiei* ('stirs up, incites, agitates') carries connotations of rebellion. The geographical sweep — 'from Galilee all the way here' — is designed to portray Jesus as a widespread, destabilizing influence. The mention of 'Galilee' (*Galilaias*) catches Pilate's attention, as the next verse shows.
6. Pilate's question about Galilean origin is not mere curiosity but jurisdictional — if Jesus is from Galilee, he falls under Herod Antipas's authority, and the case can be transferred. This offers Pilate a political exit: he can defer the decision to someone else.
7. Herod Antipas (son of Herod the Great, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea) was in Jerusalem for the Passover festival. The phrase *ek tēs exousias Hērōdou* ('from Herod's jurisdiction') refers to territorial authority. The Herod episode is unique to Luke and historically plausible — Roman officials sometimes deferred cases to local rulers. Pilate's referral is a political maneuver, not a legal requirement.
8. Herod's reaction *echarē lian* ('he was very glad') is grotesque in context — he treats Jesus as an entertainer. His desire to see a *sēmeion* ('sign, miracle') reduces Jesus's ministry to spectacle. This connects to 9:9, where Herod expressed curiosity about Jesus and tried to see him. His 'joy' at meeting Jesus contrasts with Jesus's silence, creating a scene of failed encounter between the fascinated ruler and the silent prisoner.
9. The phrase *en logois hikanois* ('with many words, at considerable length') indicates extensive questioning. Jesus's total silence (*ouden apekrinat autō*, 'he answered him nothing') echoes Isaiah 53:7 ('like a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth'). Jesus, who answered both the Sanhedrin and Pilate, says nothing to Herod — the man who killed John the Baptist (9:9) receives no word at all.
9. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 53:7. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
10. The adverb *eutonōs* ('vehemently, vigorously, with great intensity') indicates aggressive prosecution. The religious leaders have followed Jesus from Pilate to Herod to maintain the pressure. The verb *katēgorountes* ('accusing') is a legal term for formal prosecution.
11. The verb *exouthenēsas* ('having treated with contempt, having despised') is the same word used in 18:9 for those who 'despised' others. The *esthēta lampran* ('bright/splendid garment') is a mock-royal robe, a parody of kingly attire. Herod's mockery is political theater: by dressing Jesus as a pretend king, he dismisses the charge as ridiculous. He does not condemn Jesus — his sending him back constitutes an implicit acquittal.

12. This detail is unique to Luke and deeply ironic: the trial of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, reconciles two political enemies. Their enmity (echthra) may have stemmed from the incident described in 13:1 (Pilate's slaughter of Galileans, which would have offended Herod as ruler of Galilee). The joint handling of the Jesus case creates a political bond: both can share responsibility while neither takes full blame.
13. Pilate reassembles all parties — religious leaders, civic leaders, and the general public. The inclusion of ton laon ('the people') is significant: Pilate makes his second acquittal public, presumably hoping popular opinion will support release.
14. The verb anakrinas ('having examined, having conducted a judicial investigation') is a legal technical term for a formal hearing. Pilate's second declaration of innocence is more detailed than the first (v. 4) — he specifies that the examination was thorough (enōpion hymōn, 'in your presence') and that none of the specific charges (hōn katēgoreite, 'of which you accuse') has substance.
15. Pilate appeals to Herod's verdict as corroboration: two independent authorities have found no capital offense. The phrase ouden axion thanatou ('nothing worthy of death') is a formal legal assessment. The perfect participle pepragmenon ('having been done') indicates a thorough review of Jesus's entire record, not just the current charges. The double acquittal should, in any fair legal system, result in release.
16. The verb paideusas ('having disciplined, having punished, having flogged') is a euphemism for a severe beating that typically preceded release in Roman provincial justice. Pilate's proposal is a compromise: punish Jesus enough to satisfy the accusers without executing an innocent man. The injustice is already apparent — Pilate proposes to flog someone he has just declared innocent.
17. Verse 17 is absent from the SBLGNT and most critical editions. It appears in some later manuscripts as an explanatory gloss about the custom of releasing a prisoner at the festival, drawn from Mark 15:6/Matthew 27:15. We follow the SBLGNT in omitting it from the rendering. The custom is referenced in verse 18 without this explanatory note.
18. The adverb pamlēthei ('all together, with the whole multitude') indicates a unified crowd reaction. The verb aire ('take away, remove, destroy') expresses violent rejection. The name Barabbas (Barabbas) means 'son of the father' (bar-abba) in Aramaic — an ironic name, as the crowd demands the release of 'the son of the father' while calling for the death of the Son of the Father. The crowd's demand for Barabbas is not explained in Luke — the reader must accept this sudden reversal from the people who 'hung on his words' (19:48).
19. Luke specifies Barabbas's crimes: stasin ('insurrection, revolt, sedition') and phonon ('murder'). The irony is devastating: Jesus, falsely accused of inciting revolt (v. 2), is condemned, while Barabbas, who actually committed insurrection and murder, is released. The charges the authorities fabricated against Jesus accurately describe Barabbas.
20. Luke emphasizes Pilate's desire (thelōn, 'wanting, wishing') to release Jesus — the Roman governor is portrayed as reluctantly pushed toward crucifixion rather than eagerly pursuing it. The verb prosephōnēsen ('called out to, addressed') suggests Pilate is trying to persuade the crowd.
21. The imperfect epephōnoun ('they kept shouting') indicates sustained, repeated demands. The doubled imperative staurou staurou ('crucify, crucify') is a demand for the most degrading Roman punishment — reserved for slaves, pirates, and those convicted of treason. The crowd's chant drowns out Pilate's appeal.
22. Luke explicitly notes this is the third time (triton) Pilate declares Jesus's innocence, creating a structural parallel with Peter's three denials. The question ti gar kakon epoiēsen houtos ('what evil has this man done?') demands a specific crime, which is never provided. Pilate repeats his compromise offer (flogging and release) word for word from verse 16, but the crowd's response will be different this time.
23. The verb epekeinto ('they pressed upon, they were insistent, they bore down') describes overwhelming pressure. The verb katischyon ('prevailed, won out, gained strength') is a legal term indicating that the crowd's demand overcame Pilate's resistance. Luke's account makes clear that Pilate capitulated to pressure rather than reaching a judicial decision — the voices (phōnai), not evidence, determined the outcome.
24. The verb epekrinen ('he pronounced judgment, he decided, he decreed') is a judicial term — Pilate formally grants the crowd's aitēma ('demand, request'). The sentence is technically illegal by Roman standards: the governor condemns a man he has three times declared innocent. Luke does not soften this injustice.
25. Luke restates Barabbas's crimes (stasis and phonos) to maximize the irony of the exchange. The phrase paredōken tō thelēmati autōn ('he handed over to their will') uses paradidōmi, the same verb used for Judas's betrayal and for God's sovereign handing-over. Pilate surrenders Jesus not to justice but to 'their will' — mob desire replaces legal verdict.
26. Roman practice required the condemned to carry the horizontal crossbeam (patibulum) to the execution site. Jesus's inability to carry it suggests extreme physical weakness from the flogging. Simon of Cyrene (a city in modern Libya) was likely a Jewish pilgrim in Jerusalem for Passover. The phrase pherein opisthen tou Iēsou ('to carry behind Jesus') takes on symbolic meaning in light of Jesus's teaching: 'Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple' (14:27). Simon literally fulfills the discipleship metaphor.
27. This scene is unique to Luke. The women who mourn (ekoptonto, 'were beating their breasts') and wail (ethrēnoun, 'were lamenting with funeral dirges') perform the traditional Jewish mourning rites while Jesus is still alive. The distinction between 'the people' (tou laou) and 'women' (gynaikōn) may indicate that Luke sees the women as a distinct group within the larger crowd. Their grief is genuine, unlike the crowd's demand for crucifixion.
28. The address thygateres Ierousalēm ('daughters of Jerusalem') echoes the Song of Solomon (1:5, 2:7, 3:5, 5:8, 8:4) and the prophets. Jesus redirects their grief from himself to what awaits Jerusalem — the coming destruction he prophesied in 19:41-44 and 21:20-24. Even on the way to his own execution, Jesus is concerned for others. The phrase 'your children' (ta tekna hymōn) connects to 19:44 ('they will dash you to the ground — you and your children within you').

29. This is a devastating inversion of the normal beatitude: in Jewish culture, barrenness was considered a curse (cf. Elizabeth's 'disgrace' in 1:25), but Jesus declares that the coming siege will be so horrific that childless women will be the fortunate ones — they will have no children to watch suffer. Josephus records instances of cannibalism during the siege of Jerusalem (War 6.3.4), making this prophecy terrifyingly specific.
30. Jesus quotes Hosea 10:8, the prophet's description of Israel's desperate flight from divine judgment. The plea for mountains to crush them and hills to cover them expresses a preference for death over the horrors that are coming. This passage is later echoed in Revelation 6:16, where the kings of the earth cry the same words at the cosmic judgment.
30. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Hosea 10:8 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
31. This proverb is unique to Luke and enigmatic. The 'green wood' (hygō xylō) is fresh and difficult to burn; the 'dry wood' (xērō) catches fire easily. If Rome does this to an innocent man (the green wood, full of life), what will Rome do to a guilty, rebellious nation (the dry wood, ready to burn)? The proverb warns that the suffering Jesus endures is mild compared to what Jerusalem will face.
32. The word kakourgoi ('criminals, evildoers') is more general than Mark's lēstai ('revolutionaries, bandits'). The phrase syn autō ('with him') fulfills the Isaiah 53:12 quotation from 22:37: 'he was counted among the lawless.' The grammatical structure heteroi kakourgoi duo ('two other criminals') could be read as classifying Jesus as a criminal too — some manuscripts adjust the word order to avoid this implication.
32. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Isaiah 53:12. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
33. The Greek Kranion ('Skull') translates the Aramaic Golgotha (which only Mark and Matthew transliterate; Luke gives only the Greek). The traditional site was a rocky outcrop outside the city walls. Luke's account of the crucifixion itself is understated: estayrōsan auton ('they crucified him') — four words in Greek for the most agonizing form of execution the Roman world knew. The positioning of the two criminals on either side physically enacts Isaiah 53:12.
33. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 53:12 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
34. TEXTUAL NOTE: The first sentence ('Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing') is absent from P75, the original hand of Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Vaticanus, and other early witnesses. It is present in the corrected Sinaiticus, Codex Bezae, and most later manuscripts. The SBLGNT includes it in double brackets. The saying is consistent with Luke's portrait of Jesus (cf. the prayer for persecutors and Stephen's echo in Acts 7:60) and may have been removed by scribes who thought it inappropriate after the destruction of Jerusalem. We include it but note the disputed evidence. The imperfect elegen ('he was saying, he kept saying') may indicate repeated prayer. The casting of lots for garments echoes Psalm 22:18.
34. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Psalm 22:18. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
35. Luke distinguishes between the people (ho laos) who simply watch (theōrōn, 'observing') and the rulers (hoi archontes) who actively mock (exemyktērizon, 'were sneering, were turning up their noses'). The taunt 'he saved others' (allous esōsen) is unwittingly true — Jesus did save others, and the irony is that saving himself would make saving others impossible. The title ho eklektos ('the Chosen One') echoes the divine voice at the transfiguration (9:35), spoken by God in affirmation and now by the rulers in mockery.
36. The soldiers' mockery adds a military dimension to the religious rulers' scorn. The oxos ('vinegar, sour wine') was posca, the cheap wine-vinegar mixture that Roman soldiers drank. Offering it to a crucified man was a form of taunting — the soldiers' drink, not a prisoner's comfort. The scene echoes Psalm 69:21 ('they gave me vinegar for my thirst').
36. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Psalm 69:21. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
37. The soldiers' mockery parallels the rulers' (v. 35) but uses the political title 'King of the Jews' (ho basileus tōn Ioudaiōn) rather than the religious title 'Christ.' Three groups now mock: rulers (v. 35), soldiers (vv. 36-37), and one of the criminals (v. 39). The conditional ei ('if') challenges Jesus to prove his claim through self-rescue — the fundamental misunderstanding of his mission.
38. The epigraphē ('inscription, titulus') was the charge plaque (titulus crucis) that Roman practice required to be displayed above the condemned, stating the crime. Luke's version is the shortest of the four Gospels. The charge — basileus tōn Ioudaiōn ('King of the Jews') — was political treason against Rome. Ironically, the inscription is theologically true: the crucified man is indeed the King of the Jews, enthroned on a cross.
39. The verb eblasphēmei ('was blaspheming, was reviling') is strong — the criminal does not merely ask for help but insults Jesus. The participle kremasthentōn ('hanging') uses a verb associated with the curse of Deuteronomy 21:23 ('cursed is anyone who hangs on a tree'). His demand echoes the rulers' and soldiers' mockery, adding 'and us' — he wants rescue without repentance.
39. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 21:23. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
40. The second criminal's response is unique to Luke and theologically remarkable. He rebukes (epitimōn) the first criminal — the same verb used for rebuking demons and storms. His question 'Do you not fear God?' (oude phobē sy ton theon) identifies the fundamental problem: even facing death, the first criminal lacks reverence for God. The phrase en tō autō krimati ('under the same judgment/condemnation') acknowledges that they share Jesus's fate.

41. The criminal confesses his own guilt (*dikaiōs*, 'justly, rightly') and declares Jesus's innocence (*ouden atopon epraxen*, 'he has done nothing out of place, nothing wrong'). The word *atopon* ('out of place, wrong, improper, evil') is a litotes — a profound understatement. This criminal becomes the fifth witness to Jesus's innocence in Luke's passion narrative (after Pilate three times and Herod). A condemned criminal sees what the religious and political authorities refuse to acknowledge.
42. The criminal addresses Jesus by name (*Iēsou*) without a title — an intimacy that goes beyond formality. The plea *mnēsthēti mou* ('remember me') echoes the language of the Psalms (Psalm 25:7, 106:4), where 'remember' means to act in someone's favor. The phrase *hotan elthēs eis tēn basileian sou* ('when you come into your kingdom') is astonishing: hanging beside a dying man, the criminal confesses faith in Jesus's kingship and future reign. This is perhaps the most radical act of faith in the Gospels.
42. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Psalm 25:7. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
43. The response exceeds the request: the criminal asked to be remembered in a future kingdom; Jesus promises presence with him today (*sēmeron*) in paradise (*paradeisō*). The word *paradeisos* (borrowed from Persian, meaning 'enclosed garden, park') is used in the Septuagint for the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:8) and in Jewish apocalyptic literature for the dwelling of the righteous dead. Luke's characteristic *sēmeron* ('today') — the same word used at Jesus's birth (2:11), in the Nazareth sermon (4:21), and at Zacchaeus's house (19:9) — marks the present moment as the time of salvation. The promise *met' emou esē* ('you will be with me') defines paradise not as a place but as communion with Jesus.
43. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Genesis 2:8 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
44. The 'sixth hour' (*hōra hektē*) is noon; the 'ninth hour' (*hōras enatēs*) is 3 PM — three hours of midday darkness. The darkness (*skotos*) echoes the plague of darkness over Egypt (Exodus 10:21-23) and the prophetic warnings of Amos 8:9 ('I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight'). The phrase *eph' holēn tēn gēn* ('over the whole land/earth') is ambiguous — it could mean the land of Israel or the entire earth. The phenomenon was not a normal solar eclipse (impossible during Passover's full moon).
44. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 10:21-23. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
44. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Amos 8:9. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
45. The verb *eklipontos* ('failing, being eclipsed') is the same root used in 22:32 for faith 'failing.' Luke places the tearing of the temple curtain before Jesus's death (unlike Mark, who places it after), making it a sign that accompanies the dying rather than follows it. The *katapetasma tou naou* ('curtain of the sanctuary') most likely refers to the inner curtain separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place (Exodus 26:33). Its tearing *meson* ('in the middle, in two') symbolizes the removal of the barrier between God and humanity — access to God's presence is opened through Jesus's death.
45. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Exodus 26:33 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
46. Luke's Jesus dies with the words of Psalm 31:5 on his lips — a psalm of trust in God's protection. This replaces Mark's cry of dereliction ('My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' from Psalm 22:1). Luke's last word is 'Father' (*Pater*), maintaining the intimate filial relationship that characterized Jesus's prayer life throughout the Gospel (10:21, 11:2, 22:42, 23:34). The verb *paratithēmai* ('I entrust, I commit, I deposit for safekeeping') is a banking term for depositing something valuable with a trusted guardian. The verb *exepneusen* ('he breathed out, he expired') is a dignified description of death — Jesus releases his spirit actively rather than having it taken from him.
46. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Psalms 31:5. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
46. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Psalm 22:1. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
47. Luke's centurion declares Jesus *dikaiois* ('righteous, innocent') rather than Mark's 'Son of God' (*huios theou*). This serves Luke's apologetic purpose: even the Roman executioner acknowledges Jesus's innocence. The verb *edoxazen* ('he was glorifying, praising') is a Lukan term — the centurion does not merely express an opinion but praises God. This is the sixth witness to Jesus's innocence in the passion narrative. The word *ontōs* ('truly, certainly, in reality') expresses firm conviction.
48. The crowds who had demanded crucifixion now return home *typtones ta stēthē* ('beating their chests') — a gesture of grief, mourning, and possibly repentance. Luke's portrait of the crowd is more nuanced than often recognized: they are not uniformly hostile but move from demand (v. 21) to grief (v. 48). The word *theōrian* ('spectacle, sight') reduces the crucifixion to public entertainment, which makes the crowd's emotional reversal all the more striking.
49. The 'acquaintances' (*gnōstois*) and the Galilean women remain — they are witnesses who will bridge the gap between crucifixion and resurrection. Their position *apo makrothen* ('from a distance') echoes the ten lepers' position (17:12) and Peter's following (22:54). The women are named in 24:10 (Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James). Their faithful watching (*horōsai*, 'seeing, observing') contrasts with the disciples' absence — Luke does not record any male disciple at the cross.

50. Joseph of Arimathea is described as a bouleutēs ('councilor'), meaning he was a member of the Sanhedrin — the very body that condemned Jesus. Luke's description of him as agathos kai dikaios ('good and righteous') uses the same language applied to Simeon (2:25) and to Barnabas (Acts 11:24). The dash at the end indicates the description continues.
51. The phrase ouk ēn synkatatetheimenos ('had not agreed, had not voted with') is a legal term indicating dissent from the Sanhedrin's verdict. This detail is unique to Luke and establishes Joseph's moral integrity — he opposed the plot. Arimathea (probably Ramathaim, Samuel's hometown in 1 Samuel 1:1) was a town in the Judean hills. The phrase prosedechetō tēn basileian tou theou ('was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God') links Joseph to Simeon (2:25, 'waiting for the consolation of Israel') and Anna (2:38, 'looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem').
51. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Samuel 1:1. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
52. Requesting the body of a crucified criminal required courage — it identified Joseph publicly as an associate of a condemned man. Under Roman law, the bodies of the executed usually belonged to the state; release to family or friends required special permission. Joseph's willingness to approach Pilate marks him as willing to bear the social cost of association with Jesus.
53. The verb kathelōn ('having taken down') implies Joseph personally removed the body from the cross — an act of extraordinary devotion. The sindoni ('linen cloth, linen shroud') was used for burial wrapping. The mnēmati laxeutō ('tomb hewn/cut from rock') was an expensive, newly excavated burial cave. The detail 'where no one had yet been laid' (hou ouk ēn oudeis oupō keimenos) ensures that the subsequent resurrection cannot be confused with another body's presence.
54. The paraskeuē ('Preparation') was Friday, the day before the Sabbath, when all work for the Sabbath had to be completed before sunset. The verb epephōsken ('was dawning, was beginning') refers to the Jewish reckoning where a new day began at sunset, not sunrise — the Sabbath was 'dawning' as the sun set on Friday evening. The urgency of the burial is explained: once the Sabbath began, no burial work could be performed.
55. The women serve as witnesses to both the death (v. 49) and the burial — they know exactly where the tomb is and how the body was positioned. The verb etheasanto ('they observed carefully, they saw with attention') indicates deliberate observation, not a passing glance. This eyewitness knowledge will be critical when they return after the Sabbath (24:1) and find the tomb empty. Their role as witnesses is legally significant in Luke's narrative, even though women's testimony was not accepted in Jewish courts.
56. The women's preparation of arōmata kai myra ('spices and ointments') for proper burial anointing demonstrates both their devotion and their expectation that Jesus is permanently dead — they are preparing for a body, not awaiting a resurrection. The final clause kata tēn entolēn ('according to the commandment') refers to the Sabbath law of Exodus 20:8-11. Even in grief, they observe Torah. The chapter ends on the Sabbath rest — silence, stillness, waiting. Luke places the reader in the suspended moment between death and resurrection.
56. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Exodus 20:8-11. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.

24

Summary: *Luke 24 narrates the resurrection and its aftermath: the women discover the empty tomb and receive the angelic announcement, Peter visits the tomb, the risen Jesus walks with two disciples on the road to Emmaus and is recognized in the breaking of bread, Jesus appears to the gathered disciples in Jerusalem, opens their minds to understand Scripture, commissions them as witnesses, and ascends into heaven. The chapter is a theological masterpiece that demonstrates how the resurrection transforms everything — grief becomes joy, confusion becomes understanding, and scattered disciples become commissioned witnesses.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The Emmaus road narrative (unique to Luke) is one of the most carefully crafted resurrection accounts in the New Testament. The literary structure is exquisite: two disciples walk away from Jerusalem in despair, encounter the risen Jesus without recognizing him, receive a comprehensive Bible study on messianic suffering, recognize him in the breaking of bread, and immediately return to Jerusalem transformed. The phrase 'Did not our hearts burn within us?' captures the subjective experience of encounter with the risen Christ. Jesus's opening of their minds to understand Scripture (v. 45) resolves the incomprehension noted throughout the Gospel (9:45, 18:34). The ascension in verses 50-53 brings the Gospel full circle — it began in the temple (1:8-9) and ends in the temple (24:53).*

Translation Friction: *The Emmaus road episode raises questions about the nature of the resurrection body — Jesus walks, talks, and eats, yet is not recognized by people who knew him. The phrase 'their eyes were kept from recognizing him' (v. 16) uses a divine passive, suggesting God prevented recognition until the proper moment. We render the text as written without speculating about the physics of resurrection bodies. The ascension is*

described very briefly here (v. 51) and in more detail in Acts 1:9-11.

Connections: The empty tomb tradition is shared with all four Gospels. The Emmaus road echoes Genesis 18 (Abraham's hospitality to divine visitors) and the post-exile journey motif in Isaiah 40-55. Jesus's scriptural exposition connects to the promise of 21:15 ('I will give you words and wisdom'). The commission to be 'witnesses' (v. 48) is the programmatic statement that launches Acts. The blessing at Bethany (v. 50) connects to the priestly blessing of Numbers 6:24-26. The return to the temple (v. 53) completes the inclusio with Luke 1.

¹On the first day of the week, at early dawn, the women came to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared. ²They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³They entered in, and discovered not the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴While they were puzzling over this, suddenly two men stood beside them in dazzling clothing. ⁵The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶He is not here; he has been raised. Remember how he told you while he was still in Galilee, ⁷Indeed, declaring, the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day come back to life. ⁸Then they remembered his words. ⁹When they returned from the tomb, they reported all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. ¹⁰It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles. ¹¹But these words seemed to them like nonsense, and they did not believe them. ¹²But Peter got up and ran to the tomb. Bending down, he saw the linen cloths by themselves. Then he went home, amazed at what had happened. ¹³Now that same day, two of them were walking to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴They talked as one of all these matters which had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and walked with them, ¹⁶However, their eyes were holden that they should not know him. ¹⁷He said to them, "What are you discussing with each other as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸One of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ¹⁹He asked them, "What things?" They said to him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people — ²⁰How the leading religious leaders and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. ²²Moreover, some women from our group astonished us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³When they discovered not his body, they arrived and stated, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which stated that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." ²⁵Then he said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted for them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures. ²⁸As they approached the village where they were going, he acted as though he were going farther. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is nearly evening and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he had reclined at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and began giving it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him — and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was speaking to us on the road, while he was opening the Scriptures to us?" ³³They got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them gathered together, ³⁴Declaring, The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon. ³⁵Then they described what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread. ³⁶While they were saying these things, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace to you." ³⁷They were startled and terrified, thinking they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet — it is I myself! Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see that I have." ⁴⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹While they still could not believe it because of their joy and amazement, he said to them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³He picked up it, and did eat before them. ⁴⁴Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you — that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶He said to them, "Thus it is written: the

Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name in the midst of all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And look, I am sending what my Father promised upon you. But stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." ⁵⁰Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹While he was blessing them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²They worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with remarkable joy:. ⁵³They spent all their time in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The phrase *tē mia tōn sabbatōn* ('on the first [day] of the Sabbaths/week') became the standard designation for Sunday, the day of resurrection. The phrase *orthrou batheōs* ('at deep dawn, very early') indicates the first light before sunrise — they came as early as possible after the Sabbath rest ended. The 'spices' (*arōmata*) are those prepared in 23:56. The women's visit is motivated by love and grief, not by any expectation of resurrection.
2. The perfect participle *apokeklystmenon* ('having been rolled away') indicates a completed action with ongoing results — the stone is already moved when they arrive. Rock-cut tombs in first-century Jerusalem were typically sealed with a large disc-shaped stone rolled in a channel across the entrance. Luke does not describe who moved the stone (Matthew attributes it to an angel; Mark leaves it unexplained).
3. Luke uses the full title *tou kyriou Iēsou* ('of the Lord Jesus'), which is more characteristic of Acts than of the Gospel — it reads from a post-resurrection perspective where the lordship of Jesus is established. The negative *ouch heuron* ('they did not find') is stark: the absence of the body is the first datum of the resurrection, though the women do not yet interpret it that way.
4. The verb *aporeisthai* ('to be at a loss, to be perplexed, to be puzzled') describes genuine confusion — the empty tomb is not self-interpreting. The 'two men' (*andres duo*) are later identified as angels (v. 23) and described as wearing *esthēti astraptousē* ('clothing that flashes like lightning'). Luke uses 'two men' rather than 'angels,' perhaps to emphasize the witness motif (two witnesses establish testimony, Deuteronomy 19:15). The same 'two men in white' appear at the ascension (Acts 1:10).
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 19:15. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
5. The posture *emphobōn* ('terrified') and *klinousōn ta prosōpa eis tēn gēn* ('bowing their faces to the ground') is the standard response to angelic appearance. The question *ti zēteite ton zōnta meta tōn nekron* ('why do you seek the living one among the dead?') is one of the most theologically significant questions in the New Testament. The participle *ton zōnta* ('the living one') is not merely 'someone alive' but a title — Jesus is 'the Living One,' an attribute of God himself (cf. 'the living God'). The question reframes the entire situation: the tomb is the wrong place to look for someone who is alive.
6. The core proclamation is three words in Greek: *ouk estin hōde* ('he is not here') followed by *alla ēgerthē* ('but he has been raised'). The passive voice *ēgerthē* ('he was raised') is a divine passive — God raised Jesus from the dead. The command *mnēsthēte* ('remember!') redirects them to Jesus's own words. Luke's version refers to Galilee as the location of the prediction, not as the location where Jesus will appear (contrast Mark 16:7, 'he is going ahead of you to Galilee').
7. The angels quote Jesus's passion predictions (9:22, 9:44, 18:31-33), compressing them into a three-part summary: delivery (*paradothēnai*), crucifixion (*staurōthēnai*), and resurrection (*anastēnai*). The word *dei* ('must, it is necessary') reaffirms divine necessity — the passion was not an accident but a plan. The phrase *anthrōpōn hamartōlōn* ('sinful men') encompasses both Jewish and Roman agents, without singling out either group.
8. The verb *emnēsthēsan* ('they remembered') marks the turning point — the angelic reminder triggers recognition. What was hidden (18:34, 'this saying was hidden from them') is now uncovered. Remembering in Luke is not passive recall but the activation of understanding that transforms the present.
9. The women are the first witnesses and first proclaimers of the resurrection — they *apēngeilan* ('reported, announced') the news. The 'Eleven' (*tois hendeka*) reflects Judas's defection. The phrase *pasin tois loipois* ('all the rest') indicates a larger group of disciples beyond the Twelve.
10. Luke now names the women: Mary Magdalene (from whom seven demons had been cast out, 8:2), Joanna (wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, 8:3 — unique to Luke), and Mary the mother of James. The inclusion of Joanna connects the resurrection witness to the women who supported Jesus's ministry financially. Luke notes 'the other women with them' (*hai loipai syn autais*), indicating the named women were not the only witnesses.
11. The word *lēros* ('nonsense, idle talk, foolish chatter') is a medical term that Hippocrates used for the delirious talk of the feverish. Luke's use of it is devastatingly frank: the apostles dismiss the women's testimony as the ravings of grief-stricken, hysterical women. The verb *ēpistoun* ('they were disbelieving, they refused to believe') is in the imperfect tense, indicating sustained disbelief, not a momentary reaction. The early church would never have invented women as the primary resurrection witnesses in a culture where women's testimony was legally inadmissible — this detail's embarrassment guarantees its historicity.
12. Peter's response is somewhere between the women's belief and the apostles' dismissal — he runs to verify but does not yet fully understand. The verb *parakypsas* ('having bent down, having stooped to peer in') indicates he looked into the low tomb entrance without entering. The *othonia* ('linen cloths, strips of linen') lying *mona* ('by themselves, alone') are significant: if the body had been stolen, the wrappings would have been taken with it. Peter's reaction is *thaumazōn* ('wondering, marveling') — not yet faith, but no longer dismissal. Some manuscripts omit this verse, but the SBLGNT includes it.

13. The Emmaus road narrative (vv. 13-35) is unique to Luke and is considered one of the finest pieces of narrative art in the New Testament. The 'two of them' (duo ex autōn) are disciples (not apostles) — one is named Cleopas (v. 18); the other is unnamed. The distance stadiou hexēkonta ('sixty stadia') is approximately seven miles (11 km). The exact location of Emmaus is debated among archaeologists; several sites have been proposed.
14. The verb hōmiloun ('were conversing, were discussing') gives us the English word 'homily.' The perfect participle symbēbēkotōn ('things that have happened and are still in effect') indicates events with ongoing impact — the crucifixion's effects are still reverberating. They are trying to make sense of what has occurred.
15. The phrase autos Iēsous ('Jesus himself') emphasizes the personal, physical presence of the risen Lord. The verb engisas ('having drawn near, having approached') shows Jesus taking the initiative — he joins their journey unsolicited. The verb syneporeueto ('was walking along with') indicates sustained companionship, not a brief encounter. Jesus enters the conversation already in progress.
16. The passive verb ektratounto ('were being held, were being restrained') is a divine passive — God prevents their recognition. The phrase tou mē epignōnai ('from knowing, from recognizing') uses the stronger compound verb (epignōnai, 'to recognize fully') rather than simple gnōnai ('to know'). This divine restraint serves a narrative and theological purpose: Jesus will first teach them from Scripture before being revealed in the breaking of bread. Understanding must precede sight.
17. The verb antiballete ('you are tossing back and forth, you are exchanging') suggests animated but inconclusive debate. Jesus's question draws them into conversation. The verb estathēsan ('they stopped, they stood still') indicates they halt in their tracks. The adjective skythrōpoi ('gloomy, sad-faced, with a dark expression') appears only here and in Matthew 6:16 (describing the faces of hypocritical fasters). Their faces mirror their grief.
18. Cleopas (Kleopas, possibly short for Kleopatros) is named but the other disciple is not — the unnamed companion has invited endless speculation (Cleopas's wife? Luke himself?). The question sy monos paroikeys Ierusalēm ('are you the only one residing as a stranger in Jerusalem?') implies that the crucifixion was the talk of the entire city — everyone knows except, apparently, this stranger. The dramatic irony is profound: they are explaining Jesus's death to Jesus.
19. Jesus's question poia ('what things?') draws out their testimony. Their description of Jesus as anēr prophētēs dynatos en ergō kai logō ('a man who was a prophet powerful in deed and word') is accurate but incomplete — they know him as a prophet but not yet as the risen Messiah. The phrase 'before God and all the people' (enantion tou theou kai pantos tou laou) acknowledges both divine and public approval. Their description echoes the characterization of Moses in Acts 7:22.
20. They identify the agents of Jesus's death as 'our chief priests and rulers' (hoi archiereis kai hoi archontes hēmōn) — 'our' indicates they still identify as part of the community whose leaders condemned Jesus. The phrase krima thanatou ('sentence of death, death penalty') is a legal term. The verb estaurōsan ('they crucified') assigns the crucifixion to the Jewish leaders even though Rome performed the execution — Luke's account emphasizes the instigators over the executioners.
21. The imperfect ēlpizomen ('we were hoping, we had been hoping') is one of the saddest verbs in the New Testament — their hope is stated in the past tense. The verb lytrousthai ('to redeem, to ransom, to liberate') echoes Zechariah's prophecy in 1:68 ('he has visited and accomplished redemption for his people') and connects to the concept of the go'el, the kinsman-redeemer. Their messianic expectation was political liberation; the crucifixion destroyed that hope. The mention of 'the third day' (tritēn tautēn hēmeran) is ironic — they note the timeframe that Jesus predicted for his resurrection but do not connect it.
22. The verb exestēsān ('astonished, amazed, disturbed') indicates that the women's report was not simply dismissed (as verse 11 might suggest) but created genuine disturbance among the group. The phrase genomenai orthrinai ('having been early-rising, having gone early') places the women's visit in context.
23. The word optasian ('vision, appearance') may reflect the disciples' interpretation of the women's experience — calling it a 'vision' allows them to acknowledge the report without accepting its implications. The final phrase hoi legousin auton zēn ('who say he is alive') is the heart of the Christian proclamation compressed into five Greek words. The disciples report this as information, not yet as belief.
24. The verification visit (tines tōn syn hēmin, 'some of those with us,' referring to Peter and possibly others) confirmed the empty tomb but not the resurrection itself — auton de ouk eidon ('but him they did not see'). The tomb's emptiness is a necessary but insufficient condition for belief. The physical absence of Jesus is confirmed; his living presence has not yet been encountered. The emphatic final position of ouk eidon ('they did not see') communicates the disappointment.
25. The exclamation ō anoētoi ('O senseless ones, O foolish ones') is not an insult but an expression of loving exasperation. The word anoētos means 'not understanding, not thinking through' — they have the data but have not drawn the conclusion. The phrase bradeis tē kardia ('slow of heart') locates the problem not in the intellect but in the will — they are sluggish to believe. The phrase epi pasin hois elalēsān hoi prophētai ('concerning all things the prophets spoke') indicates the prophetic witness is comprehensive, not piecemeal.
26. The question is rhetorical: ouchi tauta edei pathein ton christon ('was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer?'). The verb edei ('it was necessary') is the same word used throughout Luke for divine necessity (2:49, 4:43, 9:22, 13:33, 17:25, 22:37, 24:7). Jesus's argument is that messianic suffering was not a contradiction of God's plan but its fulfillment. The sequence — suffering first (pathein), then glory (eiselthein eis tēn doxan) — is the pattern the disciples had not grasped: the cross precedes the crown.
27. The phrase arxamenos apo Mōyseōs kai apo pantōn tōn prophētōn ('beginning from Moses and from all the prophets') indicates a comprehensive, canonical exposition — Jesus explains the entire Old Testament as pointing to himself. The verb diermēneusen ('he interpreted, he explained, he

translated') is the root of 'hermeneutics' — Jesus provides the interpretive key that unlocks the whole of Scripture. The phrase *ta peri heautou* ('the things concerning himself') reveals that Jesus is the subject of the entire Bible. What we would give to have the content of this exposition — Luke records only that it happened, not what was said.

28. The verb *prosepoiēsato* ('he pretended, he acted as though, he made as if') indicates that Jesus created the impression he intended to continue walking. This is not deception but an invitation: he waits to be welcomed. The pattern is significant: the risen Christ does not force his presence on anyone but waits for invitation. The disciples must choose to extend hospitality.
29. The verb *parebiasanto* ('they strongly urged, they compelled by entreaty') indicates persistent, warm insistence. The phrase *meionon meth' hēmōn* ('stay with us') is a simple invitation that becomes the moment of grace. The time reference — evening approaching, day declining — is both practical (travel was dangerous after dark) and symbolic (spiritual darkness is about to give way to light). Jesus accepts their hospitality: *eisēlthen tou meinai syn autois* ('he entered to remain with them').
30. The four actions — took (*labōn*), blessed (*eulogēsēn*), broke (*klasas*), gave (*epedidou*) — mirror the Last Supper (22:19) and the feeding of the five thousand (9:16). The guest has become the host: the one invited to dinner takes the role of the host who distributes bread. This reversal is the moment of revelation. The imperfect *epedidou* ('was giving, began giving') suggests the recognition occurred during the distribution, not after.
31. The passive *diēnoichthēsan* ('were opened') reverses the divine closing of verse 16 — God who held their eyes shut now opens them. The verb *epegnōsan* ('they recognized fully, they knew him completely') is the same compound verb from verse 16 (*epignōnai*). Recognition comes through the breaking of bread, not through the Scripture exposition — though the exposition prepared them. The word *aphantos* ('invisible, unseen, vanished') occurs only here in the New Testament. Jesus does not walk away but simply ceases to be visible. The risen Christ's appearances are under his sovereign control.
32. The phrase *hē kardia hēmōn kaiomenē ēn* ('our heart was burning') describes the subjective experience of encountering the risen Christ through Scripture — warmth, illumination, and kindling of what was extinguished. The verb *diēnoigen* ('was opening') uses the same root as the opening of their eyes (v. 31) and the opening of their minds (v. 45) — opening is the central action of this chapter. Their hearts burned during the walk, but they did not understand the burning until after the recognition. Retrospectively, the Scripture exposition was already the presence of the risen Christ.
33. The phrase *autē tē hōra* ('that very hour') indicates they left immediately — despite the late hour and the seven-mile journey back to Jerusalem in the dark. The resurrection reverses their direction: they had walked away from Jerusalem in despair; now they rush back in joy. The verb *hypestrepsan* ('they returned') is significant in Luke — the faithful always return (the leper in 17:15, the women in 23:56). They find the Eleven already gathered (*ēthroumeous*), indicating the community has regathered despite the scattering.
34. Before the Emmaus disciples can share their news, they are greeted with a proclamation: *ontōs ēgerthē ho kyrios* ('the Lord has truly been raised'). The adverb *ontōs* ('truly, really, in fact') marks the shift from rumor to conviction. The appearance to Simon (Peter) is mentioned only here and in 1 Corinthians 15:5 — Luke does not narrate it, but this brief reference confirms that Peter had a personal encounter with the risen Jesus between verses 12 and 34, transforming his amazement into faith.
35. The verb *exēgounto* ('they were narrating, explaining in detail') gives us 'exegesis.' They share two things: what happened on the road (*ta en tē hodō*) and how recognition came in the breaking of bread (*en tē klasei tou artou*). The phrase 'the breaking of the bread' (*tē klasei tou artou*) uses the article, suggesting this is already becoming a technical term for the communal meal that would later be called the Eucharist (Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7). Jesus is recognized not in supernatural display but in the ordinary act of sharing a meal.
36. The appearance is sudden: *autos estē en mesō autōn* ('he himself stood in their midst'). The greeting *eirēnē hymin* ('peace to you') is the standard Hebrew *shalom aleichem* — but in this context it carries its full theological weight: the peace of the risen Christ, the restoration of all that was broken. This is not merely a greeting but a bestowal.
37. Despite having just heard the Emmaus report and having proclaimed 'The Lord has truly been raised,' the disciples react with terror (*ptoēthentes*, 'startled, frightened') and fear (*emphoboi*, 'filled with fear'). The word *pneuma* ('spirit, ghost') indicates they think they are seeing an apparition of a dead person, not a resurrected body. This detail underscores that the resurrection was not expected or easily believed, even by those who had reasons to expect it.
38. The verb *tetaragmenoi* ('disturbed, agitated, troubled') describes inner turmoil. The word *dialogismoi* ('reasonings, doubts, debates') can mean either 'thoughts' or 'doubts' — in context, the skeptical nuance predominates. The phrase *anabainousin en tē kardia hymōn* ('rise up in your hearts') locates doubt in the heart, not the mind, connecting to 'slow of heart to believe' in verse 25.
39. Jesus offers empirical evidence: visual (*idete*, 'look'), tactile (*psēlaphēsate*, 'touch, handle, feel'), and rational (a ghost lacks *sarka kai ostea*, 'flesh and bones'). The phrase *egō eimi autos* ('I am myself, it is I myself') is a strong identity claim — the same person who was crucified is now standing before them. The hands and feet (*tas cheiras mou kai tous podas mou*) bear the crucifixion wounds — the nail marks are the proof that this is the same body, transformed but continuous. The resurrection body is physical, tangible, and material.
40. The verb *edeixen* ('he showed, he displayed') indicates Jesus actively presented the evidence. The crucifixion wounds are not hidden or healed but displayed as identifying marks — the risen body retains the marks of the passion. This detail is theologically significant: the resurrection does not erase the cross but transforms it.
41. The phrase *apistountōn apo tēs charas* ('disbelieving from joy') is one of Luke's most psychologically acute observations: their joy is so overwhelming that they cannot yet fully absorb the reality. This is not skeptical unbelief but the stunned incredulity of receiving something too good to be true.

Jesus's request for food (brōsimon, 'something edible') serves as further evidence of physical reality — ghosts do not eat.

42. The *ichthys optou* ('broiled fish') is ordinary food — a common part of a Jerusalem meal. Some later manuscripts add 'and a honeycomb' (*kai apo melissiou kēriou*), but the SBLGNT follows the shorter reading. The fish connects to Jesus's ministry around the Sea of Galilee and to the post-resurrection breakfast in John 21:9-13.
43. The phrase *enōpion autōn* ('before them, in their presence, in front of them') emphasizes that the eating was publicly witnessed — this is a demonstration, not a private meal. The risen Jesus eats physical food with his physical body in the physical presence of witnesses. This detail served as crucial evidence against Docetism (the later heresy that Christ only appeared to have a physical body).
44. The phrase *eti ōn syn hymin* ('while I was still with you') is striking — Jesus speaks of his pre-resurrection ministry as a distinct, completed phase. The threefold division — *nomō Mōyseōs* ('Law of Moses'), *prophētais* ('Prophets'), and *psalmois* ('Psalms') — represents the three sections of the Hebrew Bible: Torah, *Nevi'im*, and *Ketuvim* (the Psalms representing the Writings as its largest and most prominent book). This is the earliest reference to the tripartite structure of the Hebrew canon. The verb *dei* ('must') reaffirms divine necessity for the final time.
45. The verb *diēnoixen* ('he opened') echoes the opening of eyes (v. 31) and the opening of Scriptures (v. 32). Now it is the *nous* ('mind, understanding, intellect') that is opened. This is a divine act — the disciples cannot understand Scripture on their own; the risen Christ must unlock their comprehension. This verse resolves the incomprehension that has been a motif throughout the Gospel (9:45, 18:34). What was hidden by divine design (18:34, 'this saying was hidden from them') is now revealed by divine action.
46. The formula *houtōs gegraptai* ('thus it is written, so it stands written') is a standard introductory formula for Scripture citation. The two elements — suffering (*pathein*) and resurrection (*anastēnai ek nekron*, 'to rise from the dead') on the third day — constitute the foundational Christian *kerygma* (proclamation), the same pattern found in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, which Paul identifies as the tradition he received.
47. The infinitive *kērychthēnai* ('to be proclaimed, to be heralded') extends the 'it is written' formula: Scripture foretold not only the suffering and resurrection but also the resulting worldwide mission. The content of the proclamation is *metanoian eis aphenin hamartiōn* ('repentance leading to forgiveness of sins'). The scope is *eis panta ta ethnē* ('to all the nations') — the universal mission that Luke will narrate in Acts. The phrase *arxamenoi apo Ierousalēm* ('beginning from Jerusalem') provides the geographic starting point and the programmatic outline for Acts (cf. Acts 1:8, 'in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth').
48. The declaration *hymeis martyres toutōn* ('you are witnesses of these things') is the commission statement that bridges the Gospel and Acts. The word *martyres* ('witnesses') carries legal weight — they have seen and can testify. The 'these things' (*toutōn*) encompasses everything: the suffering, resurrection, and the scriptural interpretation. This single sentence defines the apostolic mission: to bear witness to what they have seen and heard.
49. The phrase *tēn epangelian tou patros mou* ('the promise of my Father') refers to the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 1:4-5, 2:33). The verb *apostellō* ('I am sending') is a present tense indicating certainty. The command *kathisate en tē polei* ('sit, stay, remain in the city') requires waiting — the disciples must not begin their mission until equipped. The metaphor *endysēsthe* ('you are clothed with') presents the Holy Spirit as a garment — power (*dynamin*) from on high (*ex hypsou*) that covers and transforms them. This promise is fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2).
50. Bethany (Bēthanian) is on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem (cf. 19:29). The gesture *eparas tas cheiras* ('having lifted his hands') is the priestly blessing posture (cf. Leviticus 9:22, where Aaron 'lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them'). Jesus departs not as a prophet or teacher but as a priest, bestowing the final benediction on his people. The verb *eulogēsēn* ('he blessed') connects to the *Benedictus* of Zechariah (1:68, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel').
50. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Leviticus 9:22 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
51. The ascension occurs *en tō eulogēin auton autous* ('while he was blessing them') — his last earthly act is benediction. The verb *diestē* ('he parted, he was separated, he withdrew') conveys gentle departure. The phrase *anephereto eis ton ouranon* ('he was being carried up into heaven') is in the imperfect passive, suggesting a gradual, visible ascent. Some manuscripts omit 'and was carried up into heaven,' but the SBLGNT includes it. Acts 1:9-11 provides the more detailed account.
52. The verb *proskynēsantes* ('having worshiped, having prostrated themselves') is the first unambiguous act of worship directed at Jesus in Luke's Gospel — his departure prompts what his presence did not. The phrase *meta charas megalēs* ('with great joy') is counterintuitive: their master has just left them, yet they are filled with joy rather than grief. This transforms the departure from loss into exaltation. The verb *hypstrepsan* ('they returned') completes the movement: the Emmaus disciples returned to Jerusalem in verse 33; now all the disciples return, and the centripetal pull toward Jerusalem continues into Acts.
53. The Gospel ends where it began: in the temple (*en tō hierō*). Luke 1:8-9 opened with Zechariah serving in the temple; Luke 24:53 closes with the disciples worshipping in the temple. The phrase *dia pantos* ('continually, at all times') indicates this was not a single visit but a sustained practice of worship. The participle *eulogountes* ('blessing, praising') uses the same verb Jesus used in blessing them (v. 50) — they return to God the blessing they received from Christ. The Gospel of Luke concludes not with an ending but with a beginning: the community of praise that will, in the opening of Acts, receive the Spirit and become the church.