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The Message and Context of Luke's Testimony: An Introduction

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Abstract: "Enthroned above all creation towers the exalted, glorified Christ. Descending into the darkest recesses of human agony and sin reaches the warm, caring Jesus. These two are the same person. Luke's testimony introduces us to this man become God—God the Son. Not that this man is a mere man. No. As Luke emphasizes when presenting this person, he comes into our world already bearing a divine nature, already carrying divine qualities. Thus he arrives at his birth as Savior, as "Christ the Lord" (2:11). But he does not stride through mortality without challenges, both mental and physical. At one moment during his ministry, as he contemplates his future suffering, he declares, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened [= distressed] till it be accomplished!" (12:50). Months later, it is apparent that he has resolved his fears and worries when "he went before" the crowd of his disciples, pushing the pace on the long, steep climb from Jericho to Jerusalem, ready to face his foreordained destiny in the capital city."



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The Message and Context of Luke's Testimony: An Introduction

Enthroned above all creation towers the exalted, glorified Christ. Descending into the darkest recesses of human agony and sin reaches the warm, caring Jesus. These two are the same person. Luke's testimony introduces us to this man become God—God the Son. Not that this man is a mere man. No. As Luke emphasizes when presenting this person, he comes into our world already bearing a divine nature, already carrying divine qualities. Thus he arrives at his birth as Savior, as “Christ the Lord” (2:11).¹ But he does not stride through mortality without challenges, both mental and physical. At one moment during his ministry, as he contemplates his future suffering, he declares, “I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened [= distressed] till it be accomplished!” (12:50). Months later, it is apparent that he has resolved his fears and worries when “he went before” the crowd of his disciples, pushing the pace on the long, steep climb from Jericho to Jerusalem, ready to face his foreordained destiny in the capital city (see the Note on 19:28).

I. CHARACTER OF THIS COMMENTARY

The most distinguishing element of this line-by-line commentary is the introduction of distinctive Latter-day Saint scriptures to cast light on various passages in Luke's Gospel. Those scriptural sources consist of the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants (abbreviated D&C), and the Pearl of Great Price. The Book of Mormon recites the story of a family

1. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 9 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964–74), 2:301; 6:362–63, 402 (hereafter cited as *TDNT*); Simon J. Gathercole, *The Pre-existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2006), 46–79.

that departs Jerusalem in the early sixth century BC and makes its way to the New World by first traveling through Arabia and then sailing across the ocean, thereafter founding a civilization that becomes fractured. The Doctrine and Covenants includes revelations and inspired statements from Joseph Smith, the founding prophet of the Latter-day Saint movement, and from a few of his successors. Notably, it is here that we run into the term *testimony* to describe one of the New Testament Gospels (see D&C 88:3, 141). The Pearl of Great Price collects a number of items that come from the hand of Joseph Smith, including his own story about early revelatory events that impacted his life and the lives of his followers.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the commentary features elements of Luke's Gospel that interest Latter-day Saints, although it focuses primarily on topics that arise in the text. For example, the gap in Luke's record concerning the Savior's activities in the world of departed spirits while his body lies in the tomb is of particular interest to Latter-day Saints because an important set of doctrines arises from his activity there (see section II.G below). Moreover, Latter-day Saints emphasize the sacred and enduring nature of the family. This commentary highlights passage after passage that feature the importance of the family (see section II.B below).

Naturally, I have consulted a cluster of notable commentaries that have appeared before mine, written by scholars with viewpoints different from my own. These include Alfred Plummer's *The Gospel according to S. Luke* (1989 impression), I. Howard Marshall's *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (1978), Joseph A. Fitzmyer's *The Gospel According to Luke* in two volumes (1981, 1985), Leon Morris's *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary* (2d edition, 1988), Joel B. Green's *The Gospel of Luke* (1997), and Raymond E. Brown's *The Birth of the Messiah* (1979) and *The Death of the Messiah* in two volumes (1994). One of my heroes is the nine-volume *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich and published in English between 1964 and 1974. The thorough and thoughtful character of these works has drawn me to them. And I readily acknowledge my dependence.

This commentary rests on the language of the King James Translation of the Bible. This text is the standard for English-speaking members of the Latter-day Saint faith. All discussions begin with this translation. Paired with the KJV, as it is called, is a fresh translation that the editors of the commentary series call a New Rendition, prepared to illustrate how a Greek text can be understood a little differently and how it can be rendered into modern English.

For transliterating Greek and Hebrew terms, I have relied on the transliteration standards adopted by the Society of Biblical Literature.

Finally, I have written the commentary mostly in the present tense because, in my view, it is much more vivid than the past tense. Naturally, I have also written occasionally in the perfect tense because it describes action that comes into the present. Hence, the perfect tense links naturally to the present. Ultimately, readers will decide whether by this means I succeed at making the world of Jesus and his actions and teachings more accessible. Importantly, all of my Notes and Analyses are based on the language of the King James Translation of the Bible, not on the accompanying rendition.

II. PORTRAIT OF THE SAVIOR

A. Jesus' Compassion

More than all other Gospel accounts, except that preserved in 3 Nephi 11–26, Luke captures the compassion and love of the Savior. Such sweet concern manifests itself particularly for the downtrodden and those forced to the margins of society. Within this frame, most notable is Jesus' compassion for women and children, a compassion that springs into view in story after story. This aspect of Luke's Gospel does not derive from some special interest on his part nor from his sources. Jesus' compassion brims over again and again, a dimension of his life that is truly genuine and cannot be hidden. For instance, it manifests itself in his declaration about divorce, that gives back dignity to women caught in its web (see the Note on 16:18), and in his heartfelt appeal to the women and children of Jerusalem as he is led to the cross (see 23:27–31; the Analysis on 23:27–33). As a companion dimension, when setting the stage for his report, Luke introduces us to Elisabeth and Mary, who are recipients of God's gracious acts, of God's compassion both for them and, through them, for the rest of humankind. For God's love is bundled into the arrival of their expected children and into their respective ministries. In sum, within these stories, Luke discloses the deep, divine love that runs through his narrative of the Christ.

Further examples will illustrate. Initially Jesus himself signals his interest in merciful moments, particularly as they affect women and children, when he cites the story of the widow of Sarepta and her son whom the prophet Elijah delivers from the groping grasp of famine (see 4:25–26).

In Luke's second recorded miracle, Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law of a fever, restoring full strength to her on the spot so that she "immediately . . . arose and ministered unto [Simon and his guests]" (4:39). A few weeks later, he leads his growing band of followers up to the town of Nain and rescues an unnamed widow from a bleak future by raising her only child, a grown son, from death. His efforts to reach her village and meet the funeral procession as it moves toward the cemetery stand as a witness of his love for this otherwise unknown woman and, of course, her only son (see 7:11–16). Later, Jesus' kind and generous response to the acts of a "sinner" woman while he is a dinner guest in the home of a Pharisee—complimenting her in the presence of his host and other guests and then publicly forgiving her sins—underline not only his wish to make a point about how the men gathered in that home should treat women but especially his desire to bring relief to her (see 7:36–50).

Luke shares with the other Synoptic writers, Matthew and Mark, the twin stories of the healing of the woman with the twelve-year issue of blood and the raising of the young daughter of Jairus from the dead (see 8:41–56; Matt. 9:18–26; Mark 5:21–43). Remarkably, in Luke's retelling, Jesus allows the woman to explain to those present, most of whom know her and her situation, what she has done and what results from her touch of his garment. Now, in a brief moment, all of them know that she is healed, that she is no longer ritually impure and physically impaired, and that she can rejoin them as a full member of their community, no longer obliged to stand off by herself. In a single stroke, she is healed religiously, physically, and socially.

In three other instances, Jesus steps forward to act rather than responding to a verbal request. First, in a synagogue, he offers healing to a woman "bowed together" for "eighteen years," leading "the ruler of the synagogue" to heap "indignation" on him because it is the Sabbath. But Jesus holds firm, knowing that this woman needs relief (13:10–17). Second, in a dinner setting, a man "which had the dropsy" approaches him as he reclines at the table (14:2). Jesus rises, walks around the table, then "took him, and healed him." The plain sense is that Jesus takes him in his arms and offers healing (see the Note on 14:4). Third, as we note above, when he is forced to walk toward the cross, he turns to the women in the gathered crowd who are lamenting his fate. In poignant tones, he warns them about their future: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." Why? Because terrible "days are coming" (23:27–29). His heart aches for them.

Not surprisingly, women from Galilee are the first witnesses to the Savior's resurrection. Besides discovering the empty tomb, they meet two angels who effectively send them as emissaries to the other followers still in town (see 24:1–11). Strikingly, according to the angels, these women are among those who hear Jesus predict his passion while in Galilee. The angels' words thus clarify that the women are part of the larger group of disciples who travel with Jesus (see 24:6–7; also 9:22, 44; the Note on 8:2). More remarkably, the naming of the women at 24:10 matches an almost identical list at 8:2–3 and forms an *inclusio* of sorts that not only underscores the unity of Luke's Gospel² but also ranks these women almost on a par with the Twelve as witnesses who “have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us” (Acts 1:21).

It is not out of some special interest on Luke's part that early in his narrative, as we just noticed, he singles out women who are joining the ranks of Jesus' disciples (see 8:2–3). Their attraction to his teachings and miracles is as genuine as that of the men. This universalism, regularly noticed by commentators, fits snugly with the passage that Luke quotes from Isaiah 40 about the Baptist's ministry, “all flesh shall see the salvation of God” (3:6; LXX Isa. 40:5). Further, the presence of women among Jesus' followers bears eloquent testimony to the love and concern that they feel flowing from him to them. His genuine compassion draws them to him, notable because among these women are some who come from lofty positions in society. Luke notes one of these, “Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward” (8:3). Importantly, Joanna's discipleship illustrates not only Jesus' reach across the social and economic spectrum of his day but also his targeted inclusion of women.

Two omissions are curious. In Jesus' statement about those who are his spiritual family, specifically his mother and brothers, he omits the term “sister” that sits in the other accounts of this scene (see Matt. 12:50; Mark 3:35). Either his source does not preserve the word or, if he knows Mark's version of the report, Luke chooses to let the term “mother” carry the weight of dignity for women (see the Note on 8:21). Luke also omits an entire episode preserved by Mark and Matthew about Jesus' quiet trip to the region of Tyre and Sidon, cities that lie north of Galilee on the Mediterranean Sea. This account features Jesus' interaction with a gentile woman who begs for his help in driving an unclean spirit from her daughter (see

2. Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2006), 129–31, 147.

Matt. 15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30). But importantly, this story falls within a long section of Mark’s Gospel from which Luke adopts nothing (see Mark 6:45–8:26). Knowing of Luke’s interest in repeating reports of Jesus’ interaction with women, we are left with the explanation that he includes only accounts in his Gospel that add a distinctively important characteristic of Jesus for his readers. He does not record stories simply to multiply them without purpose (see the Analysis on 9:18–22).

A twin track that highlights Jesus’ loving concern for sinners appears in Luke’s record. The accounts are so varied and so numerous that we must reckon Jesus’ compassion for such people as a well-established facet of his ministry. As background, his society labels a variety of people as sinners, including people who lead an immoral life or whose occupations might draw them into dishonesty, such as tax collectors, peddlers, donkey drivers, prostitutes, gamblers, and shepherds.³

Jesus regularly and often pushes through the social barriers that people in his society erect against persons of such backgrounds. This stereotypical labeling is most clearly seen in his story of the Pharisee and the publican wherein the Pharisee places himself on a plane far above the publican and others whom he characterizes as “extortioners, unjust, adulterers” and, disdainfully, “this publican,” with a hissing emphasis on “this” (18:11). Jesus’ compassionate view of the publican, of course, differs markedly, declaring him to be “justified” because of his humility (see the Notes on 18:9–14).

Jesus’ outreach to such people appears early in Luke’s narrative at the calling of Levi, a customs collector whose office sits just east of Capernaum. Although this man is honorable, as his call from the Savior demonstrates, he is peevishly associated with “publicans and sinners” in the minds of those who are acquainted with him. When scribes and Pharisees complain to Jesus’ disciples instead of to him about the company he keeps, Jesus answers with a classic response: “They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (5:27–32). In a later scene, it becomes clear that over the course of Jesus’ ministry he gains a reputation for constant association with sinners, even sharing meals with them, the worst of all possible acts (see 15:1–2).

As we have seen above, Jesus’ interaction with the “sinner” woman at a dinner in a Pharisee’s home brims with warmth. As readers, we readily

3. Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, rev. ed. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1963), 124, 132; Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 303–12.

grasp his concern for this woman who comes to him in faith, seeking forgiveness for her sins. She obviously learns of his power to forgive from some earlier occasion, perhaps that of the paralyzed man carried to Jesus on a stretcher (see 5:18–26). Because her reputation is known among the guests at the meal, Jesus offers forgiveness to her in a public way—“Thy sins are forgiven,” he intones in their presence (7:48)—so that these people are witnesses of her new status before God. Significantly, although he alludes to her soiled past, he respectfully does not call her a sinner (see 7:36–50).

A final report involves the chief tax collector in Jericho, Zacchaeus. This small man is so detested by people in the town that, when he tries to get a glimpse of Jesus and his entourage, they close ranks so that he cannot see above their shoulders. And when Jesus pays attention to him by calling him out of his perch in a tree, townspeople complain noisily that Jesus is going “to be [a] guest with a man that is a sinner.” But the Savior does not recoil. Instead, in an unprecedented act, he spends that night and likely the next with this man and his family, bringing blessings into their home (see the Notes on 19:1–10).

As is now clear, the whole of Luke's Gospel overflows with the Savior's tender concern for these people. But this compassion is not merely a part of some social program that Jesus aims to institute. To be sure, he seeks to integrate repentant sinners into his kingdom. Yet this is only a part of the larger picture. Out of his continued association with such people, a strong sense emerges that the messianic era has arrived and is now present in the person of Jesus. His deepest, sweetest concern is with repentant sinners (see 15:7). God can forgive these penitent people and offer salvation to them (see 7:50). This frames a major reason that Jesus associates with and receives sinners.⁴

B. Home and Family

One of the most enduring features of Luke's Gospel is his emphasis on the importance of families. In the view of some, the topic is completely exhausted by two of Jesus' sayings. He utters the first when his mother and brothers come to visit him and he then says to a gathering, “My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it” (8:20–21). On a second occasion he declares, “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, . . .

4. Jeremias, *Parables*, 38–39, 124–27, 227.

he cannot be my disciple” (14:26), understanding the verb “to hate” in the sense of “to turn against whatever distracts from primary loyalties” (see the Note on 14:26).⁵ But is this the end of the matter? The answer is a resounding No. The themes of home and family run deep in Luke’s account. We cannot review everything here, but we can highlight some of the most important passages, leaving the rest in the Notes and Analysis sections (see also the introduction to chapter 14).⁶

Luke opens his narrative with a married couple, Zacharias and Elisabeth. Such an opening adds a layer of meaning to his record, a meaning that brings focus onto the family. According to the story, with heavenly aid, this older man and woman become parents in a miraculous way, completing their family when they welcome a son into their home. The appearance of the angel Gabriel to Zacharias the priest in the temple’s sanctuary begins the eventful actions. But they quickly move to Zacharias’s home. During a period of months, that home becomes a spiritual reservoir, a family space where God’s majesty becomes visible in the lives of this man and woman. Against all odds, Elisabeth becomes pregnant and gives birth to a son. Meanwhile, to that home comes the young Mary, who is already carrying her divine infant. At the moment the two women meet, at Elisabeth’s home, the spirit of God pours down upon them in a rush of celestial grace and knowledge, allowing Elisabeth to share with Mary one of the secrets of the ages: who the mother of the Messiah is to be—a stunning revelation to

5. *TDNT*, 4:686–87, 690–91; Francis W. Beare, *The Earliest Records of Jesus* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), 104; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, vol. 28 of *The Anchor Bible*, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1981, 1985), 1:723; Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 269.

6. Passages with family links include: Zacharias and Elisabeth; 1:28 (angel comes to Mary); 3:8–9 (father Abraham); 3:23 (son of Joseph); 4:38 (Peter’s mother-in-law); 5:1–11 (fish for families); 5:12 (cleansing leper); 5:18–26 (man with palsy); 6:6–10 (man with withered hand); 6:48–49 (families built on rock); 7:11–17 (widow of Nain); 8:19–21 (mother and brethren); 8:26–39 (Gergesene demoniac); 8:41–42, 49–56 (raising Jairus’s daughter); 8:43–48 (woman with “issue of blood”); 10:38–42 (in Martha’s home); 11:5–10 (importuning friend); 11:11–13 (gifts to children); 11:17, 21–22, 24–26 (evil in homes); 11:27 (praise for Jesus’ mother); 11:33–36 (light in home); 11:37–52 (dining in a home); 12:36 (wedding); 12:53 (family divisions); 13:35 (desolate house); 14:1–24 (dinner scene); 14:26–27 (hating family); 14:34–35 (salt); 15:1–2 (fellowship with sinners); 15:8–9 (lost coin); 15:11–32 (prodigal son); 16:27–31 (rich man’s plea); 17:12–19 (ten lepers); 18:1–5 (widow and judge); 18:20 (“Honor thy father and thy mother”); 18:29–30 (leaving family); 19:1–10 (Zacchaeus); 20:17–19 (rejected stone); 20:34–36 (given in marriage); 20:47 (widows’ houses); 21:2–4 (widow’s gift); 23:27–31 (warning to mothers).

Elisabeth that occurs inside her home. Then, at the naming and circumcision of her child, her husband, Zacharias, is miraculously released from his divinely imposed inabilities to hear and speak, and, led by the spirit of God, he prophesies about his infant son's service as the Messiah's herald.⁷ This entire set of scenes is family-centered.

The next revelation, after the one to Zacharias in the temple, comes to Mary, inside her home. Importantly, Luke's language leads us within her parents' home: he writes that "the angel came in unto her" (1:28 and the Note thereon). More than this, the Greek text agrees that the angel enters an enclosed space.⁸ Mary's surprise at the presence of a man—the angel—strengthens this observation, for the angel appears where she evidently thinks she is safe from intruders. At first, she is "troubled" when the angel appears; he responds, "Fear not, Mary," addressing directly her fear and surprise (1:29–30). Obviously, she is in a comfortable place, at least for her, and she does not expect a visitor in that spot. All indicators say that she is in her parents' home. If so, the angel comes into the space where family living takes place, subtly underscoring the home and family as the place of spiritual nourishment and instruction.

When we examine Jesus' ministry, in one of his early miracles he cleanses a leper (5:12–14). If we look beyond the miracle, we see the man's family figuratively standing off to the side. Luke records that the man is "full of leprosy," probably an advanced stage of the illness (5:12). We are obviously looking at a man who has borne his affliction for a number of years, his disease growing worse with time. This observation means that he and his family enjoy almost no contact with one another throughout much of that period. Not coincidentally, he is banned from places of gathering and worship. But in one transforming moment, Jesus restores this man to his family and home, to the synagogue and the temple, healing him socially, religiously, and physically, just as he does for the woman with the issue of blood (see 8:43–48). Among the most prized possessions that now come back to the man are his family and his home (see the Note on 5:12).

When we observe others of Jesus' miracles, we come to the same point. In each case, whether the healing of the paralyzed man (see 5:18–25), the raising of the only son of the widow in Nain (see 7:11–15), the freeing of

7. S. Kent Brown, *Mary and Elisabeth: Noble Daughters of God* (American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2002), 21–33, 42–47.

8. *TDNT*, 2:677; I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1978), 65.

the Gergesene demoniac (see 8:26–39), or the raising of Jairus’s daughter (8:41–42, 49–56), these beneficiaries of Jesus’ healing powers—and others—come from homes and families whose members have to adjust to the needs and limitations of the afflicted person. When these individuals return whole to their respective families, family members suddenly have a burden lifted from their shoulders. In making individuals whole, Jesus makes homes and families whole in a new way. Does he know this? Of course.

When we turn attention to Jesus’ teachings, we quickly discover how many touch directly on families and homes. Stepping aside from the obvious, such as the parable of the Prodigal Son, we turn to the account of Mary and Martha, a experience that occurs inside their home. An additional theme of prayer emerges from this report. Martha and Mary are hosting Jesus for a special meal. When Martha pleads with Jesus to encourage Mary help her with meal preparations, she is essentially begging or “praying” for his help. Jesus’ response, a divine response to her plea for help we must remember, comes to her in her home, pointing to the home setting as a proper place of divine instruction (see 10:38–42). Does she grasp his message and implement it in her life? The answer is Yes. The end of the story comes in John’s Gospel when, many months later, Martha walks to meet Jesus on the road into Bethany and he reveals to her, by herself, one of the grand keys of the universe: “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (John 11:25). By this time in her life, she is ready to receive such a truth.

The two themes, prayer and home, carry into chapter 11. At the request of his disciples to “teach us to pray” (11:1), Jesus turns attention to this practice, featuring families in part of his answer (see 11:1–13; the Analysis on 11:5–10). Further comments on family and home arise from critics who claim that Jesus casts out “devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils” (11:15). Their critique leads to a most interesting reply wherein Jesus appeals to three images in quick succession, all having to do with family and home (see the Analysis on 11:14–28).

In an astute statement, Jesus first draws attention to a divided kingdom: “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation,” he intones (11:17). Jesus then points to a house that leans against another house, implying either bad foundations or sloppy construction methods. Significantly, a second meaning of Jesus’ picture of the tottering house has to do with damaging divisions within a family when we understand the term “house” to mean household or family, which the Greek term *oikos* and Hebrew *bayit*

often signify.⁹ Understood in this way, Jesus' statement encompasses the unwelcome prospect of enfeebling family divisions, which he here warns against (see 11:17–20).

Jesus next leaps to the image of “a strong man.” When the strong man's palace, or his home, is secure and “his goods are in peace” (11:21), all must be well at home and in the surrounding countryside. But matters quickly turn upside down when a person “stronger than he” assails him and, in the ensuing melee, pushes him out of his house and other property. All commentators agree that, because Jesus is here warning about the devil, the strong man is the devil and the stronger is himself. That said, what do we learn? Jesus' image implies that the devil can settle into a home and remain in charge until the Lord shows up, forces him out and frees his “goods,” that is, his captive souls (Greek *ta hyparchonta*).¹⁰ Not incidentally, if we grasp that Jesus speaks both on a terrestrial level and on a celestial level, frequently at the same time, we here come upon one of the few allusions in the Gospels to his future work with departed spirits (see 11:21–23; the Notes on 11:21–22).

In a third turn, Jesus draws his critics' attention to an image of “the unclean spirit” who walks “through dry places, seeking rest.” When this spirit finds no place to rest, it returns to “my house” (11:24; note the possessive) and finds the house “swept and garnished.” It then recruits “seven other spirits more wicked than himself” and settles back into his former house. Jesus declares that “the last state of that man is worse than the first” (11:25–26). What is the lesson? A home thoroughly “swept and garnished” fails as a family's refuge from harmful influences if family members put nothing in place to resist wickedness, or to take the place of earlier enticing evil (see 11:24–26).

In all of these illustrations from chapter 11, Jesus' attention rests on the home and those who reside in it. Although one thrust of these verses brings forward the Savior's power over the world of demons, he intriguingly binds his demon-defeating power to the dimension of home and households. Frighteningly, lying amidst the banter of Jesus with his opponents and rising within his responses to them, the home stands close to the world of evil, so close, in fact, that the world of evil both forms a crippling intrusion into

9. *TDNT*, 5:131–32; G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, trans. John T. Willis, 15 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1976–2004), 2:111, 113–15 (hereafter cited as *TDOT*).

10. *TDNT*, 3:399–401; also 1:146–49.

the home and, in Jesus' words, must be overcome and separated from it. To say it another way, without a victorious effort from the good, evil will make its permanent camp within our homes. In sum, the illustrations and sayings packed into these verses illuminate Jesus' concern for the home, underlining its proper place as an intended sanctuary from evil, obviously with his help as the "stronger" one.

A second teaching arises within Jesus' Sermon on the Plain, at the end of which we hear his raised voice. "Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like." He goes on to elaborate: "He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock" (6:47–48). The image of building a house, which Jesus appeals to here and elsewhere (see 20:17; Matt. 7:24–27; 3 Ne. 11:39; 14:24–27), is one that warns a builder to be aware of seasonal rains and floods that wash through river valleys. While most commentators focus on the type of house that Jesus' words envision, the more important element for our purposes has to do with the inhabitants of the house, that is, the household or family (Greek *oikia* here; Hebrew *bayit*). Understanding the terms in their figurative sense, Jesus declares that a parent is obliged to create a home that rests on a sure foundation, on bedrock, which foundation is himself (see the Notes on 6:48–49; the Analysis on 6:20–49).¹¹

Let us take up an example of Luke not knowing the whole story, as I reconstruct the matter, or at least he does not record it. It has to do with the call of Peter and Andrew, James and John (see 5:1–11).¹² A second instance, which we shall not review here, concerns the chief tax collector in Jericho, Zacchaeus, and his family (on this latter report, see the Note on 19:5; the Analysis on 19:1–10).¹³

Most readers know the story of Jesus commandeering Peter's boat when pressed by a crowd at the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum. Jesus sits down in the boat and speaks to the crowd on the shore while Peter listens as he works on his nets. At the end of this sermon, the crowd walks away and Jesus instructs Peter to row farther out on the lake and to "let down [his]

11. *TDNT*, 5:131–32; *TDOT*, 2:111, 113–15.

12. S. Kent Brown, "Family and Home in the Savior's Life and Ministry," in *To Save the Lost: An Easter Celebration*, ed. Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Kent P. Jackson (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2009), 27–29; S. Kent Brown, "The Savior's Compassion," *Ensign* 41 (March 2011): 53–55.

13. S. Kent Brown, "Families in the Gospels," *Ensign* (forthcoming).

nets for a draught" (5:4). Peter resists: "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing." However, in the end he agrees that, "at thy word I will let down the net" (5:5). Peter strings out the net and it fills with fish, so many that his net begins to break. We can almost see some of the twisted twine begin to unravel and we can nearly hear other strands pop as they snap. Peter and his brother Andrew, who is in the boat, a fact secured by the plural pronouns in this passage, yell to their partners, James and John, to come and help them with the catch. When they finally muscle the fish into the two boats, the boats "began to sink" (5:7).

At this moment, Peter falls "at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (5:8). Peter senses that he is in the presence of the Divine after seeing Jesus cast out a devil from a man in the synagogue a day or two earlier (see 4:33–37), then witnessing Jesus heal his mother-in-law following the synagogue service (see 4:38–39), next hearing Jesus' sermon delivered from his own boat, and now, with Jesus' help, hauling in the huge catch of fish. His partners come to the same sense. Here Luke records tersely that "when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him" (5:11).

But we have to ask, What about all those fish? Do we believe that Jesus performs this miracle mainly to impress these men? Asked another way, does Jesus perform the miracle only to let all those fish go to waste? Will lifelong fishermen allow all those fish to go to waste, men who know their value for food and for income? A lot of fish lie in those two boats if they are anything close to the size of a first-century boat found in the mud along the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee in 1986. That boat measures 27 feet long, 7.5 feet wide, and is 4.3 feet deep, from gunwale to keel.¹⁴

Let us return to our question. Does Jesus spend divine power on a miracle that leaves a lot of waste? We observe, first, that the fish will feed the families of the departing men, and will give family members a little income if they sell some of the fish at the market. But that help will last a maximum of forty-eight hours. After that, the fish will spoil. These observations and the prior question put us on the horns of a dilemma. My response begins with the ancient geographer Strabo (64 BC–AD 21). When he discusses the Sea of Galilee, he notes a fish salting industry at a place called Taricheae,

14. Shelley Wachsmann, *The Sea of Galilee Boat: An Extraordinary 2000 Year Old Discovery* (New York: Plenum Press, 1995).

some five miles or so southwest of Capernaum.¹⁵ Importantly, this name comes from the Greek term *tarichos*, which means “dried or smoked fish.”¹⁶ With an effort to sail or row the two boats to this town, Peter and his partners will preserve this massive haul of fish for months. As fishermen they know the town and the service that is available there. Let’s credit their good sense to preserve this unusually large catch. Surprisingly, this part of the story remains untold (see the Notes on 5:6, 11; 9:33; 19:5).

In addition, Jesus knows that he is calling breadwinners away from their wives and children, and he graciously provides for the needs of these family members, both for sustenance and for income. In the long view, the miracle of the fish is not simply for show, a point that he makes with the devil (see 4:9–12). It carries a noble and important purpose, the sustaining of families. This nurturing care for the families of the Twelve is clothed in words from modern scripture: “I, the Lord, give unto [the Twelve of modern times] a promise that I will provide for their families” (D&C 118:3). Thus, with an unexpected turn, Jesus brings families to stand at the center of his gracious, miraculous acts (see the Note on 5:6).

Another family-centered stream runs through the Gospel. At base, it has to do with honoring parents, whether as a youth who obeys them or as an adult who cares for them.¹⁷ The commandment comes up in the conversation between Jesus and the rich ruler. The ruler begins by asking Jesus, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus responds by saying, “Thou knowest the commandments.” He then mentions five of the Ten Commandments, ending with, “Honor thy father and thy mother” (18:18, 20). Although we do not know the situation of the ruler’s parents, Jesus clearly expects him to see to their welfare (see the Note on 18:20).

Not surprisingly, the earliest example of a child honoring parents is Jesus himself. After finding the youthful Jesus in the temple, Mary and Joseph return with him to their home in Nazareth where “he was subject unto them” (2:51). It is plain that he submits willingly. A second instance

15. Strabo, *Geography* 16.2.45; Emil Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black, rev. ed., 3 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973–87), 1:494–95, n. 44; Yohanan Aharoni and others, *The Carta Bible Atlas* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2002), 173–74, maps 234 and 235.

16. Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. ed. Henry Stuart Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940), 1758; Schürer, *History*, 2:69–70; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:697.

17. Peter Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationship in the New Testament and Its Environment* (Tübingen: Mohr Seibek, 2003), 117–30.

arises in his parable of the wicked husbandmen that he recounts near the end of his life (see 20:9–16). The key element in the story has to do with the beloved son's obedience to his father when he already knows how the husbandmen have dealt with the three servants whom his father has sent to collect the rent (see the Notes on 2:51; 20:13).

On the other side, that of children taking care of parents, we notice two instances. The first stands as an example of honoring a parent. After a synagogue service in Capernaum, Jesus comes to the home of Peter where they find Peter's mother-in-law suffering from a fever (see 4:38–39). The significant part for our interests is the fact that this woman, the mother of Peter's wife, is in their home. Although we do not know what circumstances bring her to their home, it seems evident that Peter and his wife have welcomed her and are caring for her. The second example consists of both neglect and responsibility. We find them in the parable of the Prodigal Son (see 15:11–32). As the story unfolds, we see the younger son cutting his ties to his parents, deftly and purposely avoiding any obligation to care for them in their old age. In contrast, the older son stays with his parents, working hard to make the estate productive and laying a firm base for the care of his parents in their old age. Each of these instances points directly at the commandment to honor parents (see the Notes on 4:38; 15:13, 29).¹⁸

In summary, a little digging discloses a plethora of instances wherein the concern for families and homes appears at or just beneath the surface of Luke's text. Those concerns range from Jesus healing families through healing individuals, to showing his interest in widows and children, the most vulnerable in his society, to his teaching about the sanctity of the home by keeping it free of the devil's influences, to providing miraculously for the families of his chosen disciples, to stressing the command to honor one's father and mother.

18. The stories that have to do with parent-child relationships are: Jesus obeys Mary and Joseph (see the Note on 2:51); Peter and his wife care for her mother (see the Note on 4:38); Jesus respects his family members (see the Note on 8:21); daughters are an integral part of a family (see the Notes on 8:48, 55); parents are to receive children in Jesus' name (see the Note on 9:48); the younger son shows a lack of respect for his parents whereas the older son shows the opposite attitude (see the Notes on 15:13, 29); the rich young ruler is expected to care for his parents (see the Note on 18:20); the "beloved son" obeys his father even though it will cost him his life (see the Note on 20:13).

C. Doing Good

In a scene unique to Luke's Gospel, the Savior lays out the broad agenda for his ministry while standing among acquaintances in the Nazareth synagogue: "The Spirit of the Lord . . . hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (4:18). His is not a task that leads him into the chambers of power or one that puts him in the coveted company of decision makers in his society. He will go to people who have needs, a feature that drenches the Gospel account and is therefore authentic. Not surprisingly, he expects his followers to fully adopt the same focus.

In two juxtaposed sayings that have to do with widows, Jesus holds up an important thread of what it means to do good, of what it means to be his disciple. In the first, when addressing followers, he warns: "Beware of the scribes, which . . . devour widows' houses" (20:46–47). In the very next scene, when observing a poor widow offering a meager gift of "two mites" at the temple, he declares that "this poor widow . . . of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had" (21:2–4).

For Jesus, the actions of the scribes are repugnant. Plainly driven by a desire to acquire the goods of this world, they allow that desire to overrule their sense of justice and compassion for a widow's situation. Although we cannot know precisely the kind of highhanded actions that Jesus has in mind, it is apparent that these men have stepped over a threshold that will carry consequences into eternity. In fact, because of the setting for Jesus' comments, just before he prophesies about the destruction of Jerusalem (see 21:5–24), his notice of their actions exposes them as part of the evil mix that draws the wrath of God onto the city (see the Analysis on 21:1–4). The point for Jesus' followers? They must resist the natural tendency to acquire goods when it means trampling on others. Instead, they are "to heal the brokenhearted" and to assist "them that are bruised" (4:18). What is worse, the scribes behave badly while adorning themselves in the trappings of piety—walking "in long robes" and insisting that they be allowed to sit in "the highest seats in the synagogues" (20:46). Jesus' disciples are to avoid such behavior at all costs (see the Note on 20:47; the Analysis on 20:45–47).

The poor widow in the temple stands in complete contrast to the scribes and even to the temple authorities. Draped in the clothing of humility, she approaches the offering chests in the Court of the Women bearing "all the

living that she had" (21:4). We are justified in seeing her action to help others as the highest good. From her act, Jesus is able to draw his disciples into a lesson of ultimate devotion, of ultimate worship, of ultimate discipleship. Her gift severely diminishes her ability to provide for herself. But she gives anyway: "she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had" (21:4). She is the real disciple, giving all.

Luke often captures Jesus' good deeds on the Sabbath, deeds that his disciples observe and are expected to follow. We think immediately of him healing the man with the withered right hand in a synagogue (see 6:6–10). As Jesus and the afflicted man stand together in the middle of the room, Jesus turns to look into the faces of all in the gathered congregation and asks the question, "Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?" (6:9; also 14:3). Which will it be? For him, the Sabbath does not restrict doing good but offers a sacred occasion for helping others. In a brief moment, he turns everyone in the building into witnesses of his goodness even though some are "filled with madness" because they believe that he is desecrating both the Sabbath and the synagogue (6:11).

Similarly, when he finds a woman in a synagogue "which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together," he literally reaches out to her. After calling her to where he is seated, he publicly offers relief to her by laying his hands on her and declaring that she is "loosed from [her] infirmity." As all look on in a breathless silence, "immediately she was made straight, and glorified God" (13:11–13). When the synagogue director, in an effort to draw back the loyalty of the congregation to himself, objects loudly because "Jesus had healed on the sabbath day," Jesus responds by asking, "ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, . . . be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" (13:14, 16). Clearly, the Sabbath opens opportunities for doing good and, not incidentally, brings people together who witness Jesus' exemplary actions (see the Analysis on 13:10–17).

But Jesus' example does not carry his message alone. His teachings also lift into clear view the principle of doing good to others. For instance, in the Sermon on the Plain, his premier teaching in Luke's Gospel, he pushes this idea hard: "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other" (6:27–29). As if these words are not enough, he soon adds emphasis by essentially repeating the central theme: "love ye your enemies, and do good" (6:35). But the requirement does not apply just to our mental psyches or our

physical persons. It also has to do with our property: “him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again” (6:29–30). Moments later he runs over similar ground: “lend, hoping for nothing again” (6:35). In all, Jesus indicates that all such actions will bear eternal rewards: “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. . . . For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again” (6:38). The everlasting consequences are that “your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest” (6:35).

Notably, just as Jesus is the mortal example of doing good, so especially is his Father from on high: “for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil” (6:35). The issue for us is whether we are willing to follow the Father and the Son as our standard setters.

Anchoring these teachings are the beloved lines known as the Golden Rule: “as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise” (6:31). Luke’s report of Jesus’ words here resembles Matthew’s record of this saying, also found in an extended sermon (see Matt. 7:12). Likely given on different occasions, as are many duplicate teachings (see the Analysis on 6:20–49),¹⁹ the major thrust of Jesus’ two pronouncements encourages us to do good to others just as we want them to do good to us. He allows the positive incentive to rest within us—nothing more, nothing less.

The classic formulation of doing good, of course, lies comfortably in the parable of the Good Samaritan (see 10:25–37). As all know, Jesus’ narrative responds to a lawyer’s question laced with spite: “And who is my neighbour?” he hisses (10:29). Rather than lashing out at the questioner, Jesus tells a story of reprehensible neglect that contrasts sharply with genuine pity and compassionate help. Jesus makes his point razor sharp to his hearers, and particularly to the huffy lawyer, by placing a despised, distrusted Samaritan at the center of his parable. As many observe, here Jesus emphasizes in a vivid story the act of reaching out to others, no matter their origin or circumstance. When, at its end, Jesus asks the questioner who “was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves,” the man refuses to mouth the word “Samaritan” and says simply, “He that shewed mercy on him.”

19. *TDNT*, 2:631, n. 29; 4:326; Jeremias, *Parables*, 107–8, 115, 202; Marshall, *Luke*, 701; Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1988), 299.

Jesus' answer? "Go, and do thou likewise" (10:36–37; see the Analysis on 10:25–37).

D. Discipleship

Closely tied to doing good is the Savior's fundamental teaching of discipleship, of giving ourselves fully to the Savior and his ongoing work, an act that forms the wellspring of doing good that carries into eternity—such disciples shall receive "in the world to come life everlasting" (18:30). This teaching hovers like an elegant perfume over all the Gospel accounts, demonstrating that this principle forms a major thrust of Jesus' expectations. And becoming a disciple requires no small commitment. On one level, it involves bundling our family relationships inside our relationship with the Lord, trusting that he will enrich and make those relationships eternal (see the Notes on 6:48; 8:21; 14:26; 18:29–30; the Analysis on 11:14–28).

In his first extended treatment of discipleship (see 9:23–26), Jesus pairs his teaching with his first prophecy about his suffering, death and resurrection (see 9:22). Plainly, discipleship derives its ultimate meaning from his Atonement. As Jesus surrenders his will to the Father, so we must be eagerly ready to surrender our wills to the Savior. Later he adds emphasis to this combination—Atonement and discipleship—by pairing them again. After his encounter with the rich young ruler that results in this man's sorrowful withdrawal (see 18:18–25), Jesus responds to the question, "Who then can be saved?" by answering, "There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (18:26, 29–30). Discipleship, therefore, requires us to reorder what means most to us. Jesus points directly to our most enduring relationships, those within a family, and asks that we subsume them to our relationship with him (see the Notes on 6:48; 8:21; 14:26; 18:29–30; the Analysis on 14:25–35; 18:26–30).

Immediately thereafter, Jesus says to the Twelve, "we go up to Jerusalem" (18:31). And what will happen there? "all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again" (18:31–33). In this light, it becomes evident that Jesus associates his demanding but rewarding discipleship with his Atonement that will occur at Jerusalem.

How much more demanding is his concept of discipleship? Besides touching our family relationships, it also affects our attachment to property and even our natural desire to keep living. Concerning property or the goods of this world, Jesus declares a person “that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (14:33). Said another way, “what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away [from God]” (9:25), or, as Matthew records, “what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Matt. 16:26). Obviously, our interests in material wealth, whatever they may be, are not to steal our loyalty to the Savior (see the Note on 9:25).

On the question of strong loyalty to him, Jesus adds a third dimension to those of family and property—our lives. If we bend our energies to preserve our lives as they are, Jesus says that we “shall lose [them].” But “whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it” (9:24). To illustrate how deeply serious he is about us spending our lives for him and his work, he teaches that we must “take up [our] cross daily, and follow [him]” (9:23). He pushes this point later when he declares that the person who does “not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple” (14:27). His pointer to the cross, an instrument of execution, speaks volumes. Like a condemned prisoner, we lift our discipleship onto our shoulders and begin a journey to a fixed place. But in contrast to a condemned person, our path leads in a direction that we ourselves determine, with our own fixed resolve, taking us to a place where we find the Savior (see the Notes on 9:23–24; 14:27; the Analysis on 9:23–27; 21:1–4).

E. Who Is Jesus?

In Luke’s hands, Jesus stands a person beyond the ability of language to describe. We must therefore resist any temptation to approach him in a long, drawn-out discussion. Instead, we should proceed circumspectly and respectfully, relying on Luke’s language and shrinking any discussion to the bare essentials. But Luke’s language hovers at the core of the question. Does he set Jesus before us realistically and accurately, or does the real Jesus fade from our view, hidden in part by the way Luke and his sources present him? For Latter-day Saints, elements of the answer lie in Joseph Smith’s renaming Matthew and John as “testimonies.”²⁰ They are thus as

20. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2004), 234.

individual as personal testimonies; they each approach Jesus from a different angle, even and especially when they center on the same experiences, in this case the saving ministry of the Savior. In this light, Luke's Gospel also stands as a testimony.

Almost all Christian commentators bracket Jesus, calling him the Lucan Jesus, as if he languishes remote and concealed behind layers of tradition and behind Luke's theological agenda. But commentators who have no stake in the question about how the real Jesus appears in Luke's Gospel see matters very differently. Two examples will suffice. First, when writing about the frightful night of Jesus' arrest and nighttime hearing, the Jewish scholar David Flusser holds that "the sequence of events during that awful night given in Luke makes sense, while in Mark (and Matthew) the description is at the very least strange and confused."²¹ Such an assessment does not come lightly and underlines the value of Luke's record. Moreover, when examining the soldiers' role in punishing Jesus when in Pilate's custody (see 22:63–64), Flusser writes that "we have found further evidence for the great value of the Gospel of Luke" in his accurate recounting of the cruel game played on Jesus after his arrest.²² In agreement with these judgments, the Christian scholar Richard Bauckham sees clear evidence that Luke relies on eyewitness testimony that makes his account a reliable story of the mortal Jesus. This judgment stands in contrast to the claim that early Christians valued the story of Jesus only in the context of the here and now of the church's existence, that is, that for early church members the story of Jesus possesses no real value for its own sake.²³

Where does Luke get his eyewitness testimony that he claims to possess (see 1:1–4)? We begin with his access to Mary, Jesus' mother, the most important witnesses to her son's life and ministry. Beside the tradition that puts her in Ephesus with the Apostle John, another tradition locates her in Jerusalem, where she lives out her life.²⁴ Two shrines stand in memory of her burial there, on opposite sides of the Old City, the Dormition Abbey

21. David Flusser, "Who Is It That Struck You?" in *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988), 605.

22. Flusser, "Who Is It That Struck You?" 609.

23. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 274–78.

24. The Assumption of Mary, 44–47, in Montague Rhodes James, *The Apocryphal New Testament: Being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypses* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924), 208, also 213, 215, 217; Edward P. Blair, "Mary Mother of Jesus," George Arthur Buttrick, ed., *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 4 vols. and suppl. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962, 1976), 3:293 (hereafter cited as *IDB*).

and the Virgin's Tomb. If, in fact, she is still in Jerusalem some twenty-three or twenty-four years after the death and resurrection of Jesus, a reasonable assumption, Luke surely meets her on his trip to Jerusalem with the Apostle Paul when they travel together. What is the evidence?

In three extended passages in the book of Acts, Luke adopts the pronoun "we" when describing events (see Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–21:18; 27:1–28:16). It is clear that on these occasions he is a companion of Paul.²⁵ At the end of the second "we" section, we find Paul in Jerusalem almost seven days before his arrest by Roman soldiers (see Acts 21:27). Hence, Luke is in the capital city with him. Two nights later, soldiers escort Paul to Caesarea on the Mediterranean coast (see Acts 23:23–33). It is reasonable that this period of time, and likely a few days more (Luke does not accompany Paul to the seacoast with the military guard, of course), afford Luke an open opportunity to interview church members in Jerusalem about what they know of Jesus' ministry, death and resurrection, including his post-resurrection appearances.²⁶ If by chance Mary is in town, she is one person whom Luke will want to meet. If she is not in the city in those days, he will seek out people who know her and her son. Thus, it is a simple step to postulate an occasion when Luke meets Mary or other relatives and acquaintances. Furthermore, as Paul does, so Luke surely consults with members of the Twelve about the Savior's life and ministry (see 1 Cor. 15:3–7; Gal. 1:18–19). And no reason exists to think that these people distort their memories of Jesus in the retelling.²⁷

As a further example, we consider the four daughters of "Philip the evangelist" (Acts 21:8–9). These young women grow up in Jerusalem because we first hear of their father as a priesthood leader serving among the Greek-speaking members of the Church there (Acts 6:5). Hence, they are witnesses not only to the charitable ministrations of their father but also to the early work of the Twelve after the Savior's ascension. In fact, the older daughters may have met Jesus and then seen him after his resurrection, although this is uncertain. What is certain is that they meet prominent

25. Frederick Fyvie Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1951), 2–3; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 31 of *The Anchor Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 98–103.

26. Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles*, 391.

27. Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke*, *The International Critical Commentary*, 5th ed. (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1989), xxiii (hereafter cited as Plummer, *Luke*); Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 300–301, 319–57.

church members in Jerusalem during their youth and hear their stories, including possibly those of Jesus' mother and his brothers (Acts 1:14). Thus, these young women become a credible source for Luke as he gathers information for his Gospel and book of Acts both during the "many days" that he stays in their home (Acts 21:10) and during the two years that he resides in Caesarea while the Apostle Paul is under house arrest (Acts 24:27). They will be among the important witnesses whom Luke interviews, making their recollections a fundamental part of his written reports.²⁸

What may be more intriguing is the question whether Luke spends the two years between Paul's arrest and his trip to Rome, recounted in the third of the "we" passages (see Acts 27:1–28:16), roaming around Palestine and gathering information.²⁹ As I suggest in section V.C below, it appears that he at least visits Galilee.

From Cleopas, one of the two disciples walking to Emmaus, Luke captures the most important title that the Savior repeats for himself after the resurrection. When the Savior falls in with the two travelers, he calls himself "the Christ," that is, "the Messiah" or "the Anointed One," an action that establishes how he sees himself, now attested by witnesses (see the Note on 24:26).³⁰ In an effort to emphasize this, Luke quotes the Risen Jesus repeating this title later in the presence of his beloved followers who gather together the evening after his resurrection (see the Note on 24:46; the Analysis on 24:13–35). Naturally, others label him "the Christ" during his mortal ministry, including angels and demons. But the Savior plainly reserves the right to call himself by this title after he rises from the dead (see 2:11, 26; 4:41; 9:20; for common views of the Messiah, see 23:37; the Notes on 19:38; 20:41–44; the Analysis on 20:41–44).

The two angels who appear at the empty tomb introduce another title that, at that moment, bears equal weight with "the Christ" as a post-resurrection appellation for the Risen Jesus. Their words on that occasion literally say in Greek, "Why seek ye the Living One with the dead?" (24:5). The title translated "the Living One," of course, points directly at Jesus as the now eternally living God.³¹ He is both resurrected from the dead and the

28. Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles*, 386–87.

29. G. B. Caird, *The Gospel of St. Luke*, The Pelican New Testament Commentaries (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), 19, 27, 116.

30. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 47, 55.

31. *TDNT*, 2:865; *TDOT*, 4:338–39.

possessor of everlasting life in himself, life that he can offer to others (see the Note on 24:5; John 1:4; 6:57; 1 John 1:2).³²

Close behind “the Christ” and “the Living One” are titles that Jesus calls himself during his mortal life, titles that eyewitnesses hear from his lips. One of the most prominent is “the Coming One,” a title that John the Baptist first repeats and others copy (see 3:16; 7:19; the Note on 3:16). More than this, Jesus repeats this appellation for himself in the presence of others, specifically his closest disciples, assuring its genuineness (see 13:35; the Notes on 19:38; 20:16; the Analysis on 19:28–40; 22:39–46). This “Coming One” bears the responsibility of both calling sinners to repentance and kindling a fire on earth, as well as carrying powers of purification and judgment (see 5:32; 12:49, 51–53).³³

According to Luke, a second title that the mortal Jesus applies to himself is “the Son of man.” Although this appellative generates a lot of debate among scholars whether Jesus really adopts this title for himself (see the Notes on 5:24; 9:22), modern scripture settles the matter, if this name carries through the centuries: “in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is [God’s] name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ” (Moses 6:57; see also Moses 7:35; the Analysis on 9:18–22).³⁴ Under the title “Son of man,” for example, Jesus forgives sins and heals (see 5:24), is in charge of Sabbath (see 6:5), seeks out and saves the lost (see 19:10), and suffers, dies and rises from the dead (see 9:22, 44; 17:25; 18:31–33). Moreover, he will return suddenly as the Son of Man, bringing judgment to the earth (see 17:24–36).

One of the few titles that Jesus applies to himself is “master” or “teacher” (Greek *didaskalos*).³⁵ It turns up in his instructions to Peter and John about preparing for the Passover meal that he will share with the Twelve. When they find the home where the meal is to be served, they are to say to the

32. Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, vol. 29 of The Anchor Bible, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1966, 1970), 1:283.

33. *TDNT*, 2:666–69.

34. *TDNT*, 2:668–69; S. Kent Brown, “Man and Son of Man: Issues of Theology and Christology,” in *The Pearl of Great Price: Revelations from God*, ed. H. Donl Peterson and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1989), 57–72; Richard D. Draper, S. Kent Brown, and Michael D. Rhodes, *The Pearl of Great Price: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 103–4, 130.

35. Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 190–91 (hereafter cited as BAGD); *TDNT*, 2:148–57; 6:630; Marshall, *Luke*, 310.

owner, "The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?" (22:11). Here Jesus repeats a title by which the homeowner knows him, thereby acknowledging this title to be completely appropriate as it applies to himself. It is also clear that this unnamed man is a disciple who regularly calls Jesus by this honorific term (see 8:49; 9:38; 10:25; 18:18; etc.; the Notes on 7:40; 9:33; 22:11; the Analysis on 22:7–13).³⁶

One further example is "Lord" (Greek *kyrios*). In Luke's Gospel, this term carries meanings as diverse as "sir" and "Jehovah." In most instances, the pointer is to the God of the Israelites, thus acknowledging Jesus' majesty in this office.³⁷ And Luke is responsible for writing a lot of them (see 7:13, 31; 10:1; 11:39; 12:42; 13:15; etc.). Only once does Jesus apply this title to himself when he declares, "the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath" (6:5). Especially here, when addressing the issue of how to observe the Sabbath, is it appropriate for Jesus to push himself forward as Lord. Why? Because the Sabbath represents "a sign between [the Lord] and [the Israelites] throughout your generations." Further, the observance of this day forms a "perpetual covenant" between God and his people (Ex. 31:13–17). Hence, the Sabbath offers the one regular opportunity for God's people to show their devotion to their Lord. Jesus now steps forward as that person, the same Lord who sets out the law of the Sabbath (see the Notes on 2:11; 4:16; 5:8; 7:13, 31).³⁸

To complete this part of our review, we turn to the virtue that flows from Jesus, a virtue that overcomes illness and pushes aside the strictures of ritual uncleanness. A single Greek term, *dynamis*, is regularly rendered either "virtue" or "power," making them synonyms. This said, Luke preserves two reports that feature Jesus coming into direct contact with individuals who are ritually unclean. But there must have been other instances because he often walks among multitudes of people with various ailments, though Luke writes only two notices (see 4:40; 6:19). In the first report of an unclean individual, "a man full of leprosy" approaches him, begging Jesus to "make me clean." In typical fashion, Jesus "put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean" (5:12–13). By touching this man,

36. Marshall, *Luke*, 792.

37. BAGD, 459–61; *TDNT*, 3:1058–62, 1086–93; Ceslas Spicq, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, trans. James D. Ernest, 3 vols. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 2:347–50 (hereafter cited as *TLNT*).

38. *TDNT*, 7:21–22; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:197–219, reviews all of the titles for Jesus in Luke and Acts.

he surely contracts ritual uncleanness. Why? Because, according to the Mosaic law, any long-term skin disease—leprosy or otherwise—brings on the sufferer a state of uncleanness (see Lev. 13:1–46; the Note on 17:12), and a person who touches such an afflicted individual contracts uncleanness as well (see Num. 5:2–4).³⁹ In the second report, an unnamed woman, with “an issue of blood twelve years,” approaches Jesus in a crowd and touches “the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch[ed]” (8:43–44). Knowing that she is ritually unclean, we might assume that Jesus is now rendered unclean. But that is not the case. Instead, his “virtue is gone out of [him]” and “she was healed immediately” (8:46–47). As these two cases show—the leper and the afflicted woman—the power of Jesus overwhelms the uncleanness that they each bear in their bodies and makes them whole, leaving him unaffected (see the Notes on 5:13; 7:6; 8:47; 10:7; the Analysis on 5:12–16).

F. Jesus in His World

We ask, What can we learn from Luke about Jesus’ youth and adult years, and his place in his world? As a child, of course, Jesus learns to ride a donkey without a saddle or bridle, guiding the donkey with a long stick pressed to the side of its head, as Middle Eastern children still do. That skill does not abandon him when he sits on the young donkey and rides, without incident, down the steep western slope of the Mount of Olives and up into the city (see 19:35, 45). Incidentally, the fact that the donkey is young—called “a colt”—tells us that Jesus is not so big a man that the donkey cannot walk steadily with him on its back (see the Note on 19:30).

Still as a child, Jesus comes into contact with at least four spoken languages, and he presumably learns them all, at least to the degree that a child interacts with others in his or her world. The first language that he learns is Aramaic, the spoken tongue of his parents. It is the dominant language of ancient Palestine,⁴⁰ although dialectical variations occur from place to place as the speech peculiarity of Galilee, attributed to Peter, illustrates (see the Note on 22:59). Because he is taken to Egypt at a young age,

39. Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, vol. 3 of *The Anchor Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 772–808; Josephus notices this condition in his work *Against Apion* 1.31 (§281); cited in Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 237.

40. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays*, in *The Semitic Background of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 7–8.

and evidently is there for some time, as Coptic tradition holds, he learns spoken Egyptian by playing with other children (see the Note on 2:39).⁴¹ When the family finally returns to Nazareth, the young Jesus will go to Hebrew school and learn to read the text of the Bible, grasping its subtleties as shown in the scene at the temple “in the midst of the doctors” who are both “hearing him, and asking him questions” (JST 2:46).

Further proof that he knows the Hebrew Bible lies in the story of his visit to the Nazareth synagogue (see 4:16–20). Although Hebrew is likely not spoken in the town, he learns it well enough to read the Bible aloud in synagogue services. Jesus' next language acquisition is Greek, probably learned in Sepphoris, a nearby town desperately in need of skilled artisans to rebuild it after its destruction in 4 BC. Because of Joseph's skills, he is in demand. And when Jesus acquires basic building skills from his father, as is customary (see Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3), Joseph doubtless takes him to work where he meets Greek-speaking foremen and co-workers (see the Note on 4:16; JST Matt. 3:25, “he served under his father”). Thereafter, Jesus demonstrates his ability with Greek in his interview with Pilate, an educated Roman who knows Greek but does not know Aramaic. According to all the sources, no interpreter stands between them in their conversation. Our conclusion is that Jesus knows and speaks the Greek language (see the Notes on 23:2–3).

From all indications, Jesus grows up in a normal home, complete with devotion to God and respect for law, most notably the Mosaic law. While he is an infant, his parents conform to the requirements both of purifying his new mother at the temple and of paying the five shekels for his redemption (see the Notes on 2:22–24; the Analysis on 2:21–24). As he grows up, of course, he participates in the customary worship practices of his society as illustrated not only by his appearance at the temple with his parents (see 2:41–51) but also by regular attendance at synagogue services (see the Note on 4:16). Moreover, as a youth he “was subject unto [his parents]” (2:51) and, when learning a trade, “he served under his father” (JST Matt. 3:25). To be sure, because of his extraordinary gifts, his mother especially pays close attention to his youthful progress (see 2:19, 51). But we find nothing in the Gospels to indicate an unusual upbringing (see the Notes on 2:51 and 8:21), although John's Gospel hints that his mother is already a witness to his remarkable powers (see John 2:1–5; JST John 2:1–5).

41. Brown, *Mary and Elisabeth*, 61.

Early on, Luke signals Jesus' practice of always attending worship services: "as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day" (4:16). Luke thus makes plain that this is Jesus' habitual pattern so that we picture him in a synagogue service each Sabbath. As Jesus gathers disciples around himself, he will model for them how he wants them to worship after establishing his church. More than this, he respects the way that services are run in houses of worship as his act of sitting down to comment on scripture, a custom in his day, demonstrates (see the Note on 4:20).

Luke offers to us the sense that Jesus arises early, as do most of his contemporaries of course, and arrives at places of worship early. The illustration arises in Luke's description of Jesus teaching in the temple during the last week of his life. In a summarizing statement, he writes that in those few days "all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him" (21:38; also John 8:2, "early in the morning he came again into the temple"). Besides mirroring the habits of his audience, Jesus also seems to be anxious to reach as many people as possible during these last days on earth (see the Note on 20:16; the Analysis on 20:9–16 and 23:27–33). Hence, he comes early to begin his day of teaching (see the Note on 21:38).

Several accounts tell us about a characteristic of Jesus that his acquaintances know: he is an uncontrollable talker. At every turn, it seems, he takes opportunity to teach, regularly overpowering the conversation so that others have to remain quiet. Two examples will suffice. In a scene wherein he is the guest of honor for a meal in the home of Simon the Pharisee, he is approached by "a woman . . . which was a sinner" (7:37) who, as he reclines, proceeds to wash and anoint his feet (see 7:38). To the host's unspoken criticism about allowing this woman to touch him, Jesus responds by taking over the conversation and teaching all in the house about forgiveness. He simply dominates the scene (see the Note on 7:40). Later, at a dinner hosted by "one of the chief Pharisees," Jesus senses the ill will of the host and the other guests when a man afflicted with "the dropsy" approaches him to be healed. The occasion is "the sabbath day" (14:1–2). After healing the man, he once again takes over the conversation, first making a point about meeting basic needs on the Sabbath and then teaching about humility and a proper response to the poor (see 14:3–24; the Analysis on 14:1–6). In sum, in both scenes, Jesus purposely dominates the table talk to make his teachings heard (see 6:6–10; 7:36–50; 11:37–52; 13:10–17; the Note on 7:40; the Analysis on 5:27–32; 14:1–6).

Closely tied to this aspect of Jesus' personality is a dimension that penetrates and weaves itself through all the Gospel accounts. It is the sense

that Jesus always has at hand a ready response, a stirring story, an illuminating illustration. It is as if he prepares for, almost uncannily, situations, queries, and challenges. For example, to the huffy lawyer who demands to know, "who is my neighbour?" Jesus recites the timeless parable of the Good Samaritan (see 10:25–37). To a guest in the home of a chief Pharisee who counters Jesus' requirement that we reach out to "the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind" (14:13) he repeats the enduring story of "the great supper" (see 14:16–24). To those who complain that Jesus eats with publicans and sinners he offers immediately the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the Prodigal Son (see 15:1–32). And on it goes.

Luke and his fellow Synoptists, Mark and Matthew, portray the length of Jesus' ministry to be much shorter than does John. According to the three synoptic Gospels, Jesus visits Jerusalem once as an adult for the Passover celebration that marks his death (see 19:45; Matt. 21:10; Mark 11:11). John, on the other hand, follows Jesus to Jerusalem twice for Passover feasts, and notes a third occasion, thus imparting the impression that his ministry lasts about three years (see John 2:13; 6:4; 11:55).⁴² Intriguingly, a little digging in Luke also leads to the conclusion that Jesus visits the capital city on multiple occasions and therefore his ministry runs for a longer period of time.⁴³

The first hint lies in the story of Jesus as the guest of Martha and Mary in Martha's "house" (10:38). We know from John's Gospel that Martha and Mary reside in Bethany, an hour's walk from Jerusalem (see John 11:1, 18; JST John 11:2, 17). In Luke's treatment, Jesus comes to Martha's home long before he arrives in the capital city. It is probable that Luke moves the story from its original setting in Bethany to a place in his narrative where it makes an important point about prayers and homes, topics that will arise immediately in chapter 11 (see the Analysis on 10:38–42; 11:1–4; 11:14–28). If, in fact, this report is out of place and belongs to an earlier visit by Jesus to Jerusalem, as is likely, then we possess a modest pointer to more than one trip to the capital city (see the Notes on 10:38; 13:34; 19:47; 22:9; 23:5, 28, 50; 24:13).

42. Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology: Principles of Time Reckoning in the Ancient World and Problems of Chronology in the Bible* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 283–84; a fourth possible Passover may be noted, depending on the manuscripts of John 5:1: the earliest two from about AD 200, \mathfrak{P}^{66} and \mathfrak{P}^{75} (the first held in the Bodmer Library near Geneva and the latter now in the Vatican Library), read "a feast of the Jews," not a conclusive reference to Passover.

43. Plummer, *Luke*, 290, 521.

This initial impression finds reinforcement elsewhere—the aggregate of several clues forms a proof of multiple visits. The parable of the Good Samaritan that Jesus tells just before his visit to the home of Martha and Mary fits more naturally in the Jerusalem area than in a Galilean or Perea setting. For Jesus draws attention to the Jerusalem-Jericho road as the setting for his story (see 10:30). To be sure, a northern audience will grasp his point and many will be familiar with the road. But it makes more sense that he interacts with the lawyer in the neighborhood of that road, perhaps where they can both see it (see the Note on 10:30).

The two disciples traveling to Emmaus are not just walking to this town that lies a few miles west of Jerusalem; they most likely reside there (see the Note on 24:13). Their request that Jesus, unknown to them for the moment, share a meal with them points to their home, not to an inn (see the Note on 24:29). In addition, when we meet Joseph of Arimathaea, originally from a town near Jerusalem, he is already sympathetic to Jesus' cause if not a disciple (see 23:50–53). The question is, How do people who live in the south of the country, in or near the capital city, become disciples of Jesus, whose main activities take place in Galilee, in the north? The most natural explanation is that Jesus comes to Jerusalem on at least one occasion long before his last Passover and draws them to himself (see the Notes on 23:50–51).

Likewise, when Jesus instructs Peter and John to see that preparations are complete for the Last Supper, their question “Where wilt thou that we prepare?” assumes that these Galilean fishermen know the city, including the upscale west side, hinting that they have been guests in those homes before (see the Note on 22:9). Further, the impression jumps out that the authorities in Jerusalem come to a decision about destroying Jesus very soon after he arrives in town, indicating that they know him and his reputation from earlier visits (see the Note on 19:47). This agrees with the charge that they level against him in front of Pilate, that “He stirreth up the people, . . . beginning from Galilee to this place” (see the Note on 23:5). It is an easy conclusion to hold that Jesus visits Jerusalem more than once during his ministry (see the Analysis on 22:7–13).

G. The Gap

One of the most puzzling omissions in the four Gospels has to do with Jesus' ministry to the departed spirits of the dead. But hints lie all across the New Testament. As Albrecht Oepke writes, “That a journey to the lowest regions [by Jesus] preceded that to the upper is seldom emphasized in

the NT but everywhere presupposed"⁴⁴ (see Matt. 12:40; Rom. 10:7; Eph. 4:9; 1 Pet. 3:18–20; 4:6; Rev. 1:18). In Luke's account, the first hint arises when Zacharias prophesies that the dawning messianic age, to be heralded by his infant son, will bring light not only to inhabitants of this world but also "give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (1:79). These words rest on Isaiah 9:2, a passage that early Christians see as announcing Jesus' descent into the spirit world to release the imprisoned souls (see the Note on 1:79).⁴⁵

A second tip occurs when Jesus stands up in the Nazareth synagogue and reads the lines: "The Spirit of the Lord . . . hath sent me . . . to preach deliverance to the captives, and . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised" (4:18; see the Note thereon). Centuries later, these words inspire Joseph F. Smith to write, when recalling his vision of the spirit world, that the Savior comes to the spirit prison, "declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful" (D&C 138:18). Later, he notices that Jesus organizes his "chosen messengers . . . to . . . proclaim liberty to the captives who were bound, even to all who would repent of their sins and receive the gospel" (D&C 138:31).⁴⁶

A third clue lies in Jesus' instructions to Simon Peter after giving a sermon out of his fishing boat. He commands, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught" (5:4). Often, the term *the deep* or *the depth* (Greek *bathos*) in the Septuagint raises the specter of the sea, usually a place where the dead are to be found. But in a remarkable passage, Isaiah writes that the deep is to become a path of rescue, "a way of passage for the delivered and redeemed" (LXX Isa. 51:10). The Apostle Paul mirrors this notion, noting that Jesus' post-mortal work will have something to do with "the deep" (Rom. 10:7). Further, Ezekiel writes that those in need of redemption, as personified by Pharaoh and his dead warriors, reside in the depth (see LXX Ezek. 26:19–20; 31:14–15, 18; 32:18–21, 24). Hence, Jesus' reference to "the deep" draws up both the doctrine of redemption and his

44. TDNT, 2:424.

45. *Gospel of Nicodemus* 18.1, in Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher, eds., *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963, 1965), 1:471 (hereafter cited as *NTA*); S. Kent Brown, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dawn Pheysey, with Nicole Cannariato, *Beholding Salvation: The Life of Christ in Word and Image* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: BYU Museum of Art, 2006), 90–93.

46. Compare "We'll Sing All Hail to Jesus' Name," in *Hymns of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), no. 182, verse 3: "He [Jesus] seized the keys of death and hell / And bruised the serpent's head; / He bid the prison doors unfold, / The grave yield up her dead."

role as redeemer, not only for those in this world but also for those in the world to come (see the Note on 5:4).

A fourth instance stands in Jesus' warning words about evil influences on families (see 11:17–26). He describes “a strong man” whose “goods are in peace,” and then “a stronger than he” who pushes him out of “his palace” and takes “from him all his armour” (11:21–22). In this scene, the “strong man” is the devil and the “stronger” is the Savior. Importantly, the “goods” of the “strong man” are the captive souls whom Jesus rescues, whether in this life or the next (see the Notes on 11:21–22; the Analysis on 11:14–28).⁴⁷

A fifth hint sits in an unexpected place. After the Risen Jesus joins the two disciples walking to the town of Emmaus, they rehearse to him events of recent days which lead to the Savior's crucifixion. Then, according to the King James Translation, they say, “to day is the third day since these things were done” (24:21). This translation understands the Greek verb *agō* in its impersonal sense, standing for the verb “to be.” But the personal understanding is to be preferred: “*he [Jesus] is spending the third day*” (emphasis added).⁴⁸ In these words we find a marker for Jesus' activities following his death even though the disciples appear to misunderstand how these are to occur. It therefore seems evident that these disciples know his prior teachings on this subject which include his visit among the departed spirits (see the Notes on 23:43 and 24:21; see also D&C 138:11–37).

H. Gentiles

Embedded in the fabric of Luke's Gospel is an unabashed interest in Gentiles, what we might call *universalism*. One obvious reason is found in Luke's book of Acts wherein he will chronicle the growth of the church among Gentiles. What he finds in the story of the Savior are prior pointers to that later era when the gospel message will reach out to and embrace these people. Given Luke's interest, it is puzzling that he omits a story found in Mark's record that narrates Jesus' trip to the Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon, gentile towns north of Galilee, and his help for a gentile woman, a Syrophenician by birth, who seeks his healing powers for her afflicted daughter (see Mark 7:24–30). But this story stands in a section of Mark that finds no similarities in Luke's report. Luke does not seem

47. *TDNT*, 3:399–401.

48. BAGD, 14; Friedrich Blass and Albert Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), §129; Marshall, *Luke*, 895.

to know anything from this long portion, Mark 6:45–8:26, the so-called “great omission.”⁴⁹ This omission, incidentally, raises questions about how much Luke follows Mark’s account, an issue that we will come to later.

The first song sung for the Gentiles is voiced by the aged Simeon when he takes the infant Jesus in his arms at the Jerusalem temple and, in worshipful reverence, hymns the words, “mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou has prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles” (2:30–31). Thus, with prophetic foresight, Simeon sees the long-range impact of Jesus’ ministry, as Luke will begin to rehearse in the book of Acts. But he also foresees closer events that will arise during Jesus’ mortal life. Examples follow.

Initially, Jesus himself signals his deep interest in Gentiles in the Nazareth synagogue, among friends and neighbors. After he reads a scripture passage from Isaiah, he sits down to offer comment, a customary act. In his oral commentary, he brings up two stories from the Old Testament that illustrate God’s compassion for Gentiles: Elijah and the feeding of the widow of Sarepta and her son during an extended famine as well as the healing of Naaman, the Syrian leper, by Elisha (see 4:25–27; the Analysis on 4:16–30; 1 Kgs. 17:8–16; 2 Kgs. 5:1–14). The hateful response of the congregation to his references to these stories demonstrates that he faces prejudice in its worst forms in his society (see 4:28–29).

A miraculous case arises in Capernaum when a centurion, a Roman military officer, seeks Jesus’ help in healing a “dear” servant now near death (see 7:1–10). Jesus responds immediately by walking to the gentile man’s home, ready to step onto his property, an act that will render Jesus unclean in the eyes of fellow Jews. Although he does not go into the man’s home, his willingness to do so demonstrates his caring concern (see the Notes on 7:2, 6–7; the Analysis on 7:1–10).

We soon run into another instance when Jesus and his disciples sail to the east shore of the Sea of Galilee, the gentile side, and encounter a bedeviled man who dwells “in the tombs” (8:26–39). Even though Jesus casts out the devils who reside in the man, the local residents beg him to leave because he allows the devils to go into their swine and to cause them to stampede into the lake. Jesus departs, apparently defeated in his first attempt to bring his message to Gentiles, but instructs the man to return “to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee.” The result is the man never stops talking. He recounts “throughout the whole city how

49. Caird, *Luke*, 26.

great things Jesus had done unto him” (8:39). Unknowingly, he prepares his people for members of the Seventy who show up a few months later, with Jewish eating laws suspended so that they can accept the hospitality of Gentiles (see 10:7–8). Do they enjoy a harvest among Gentiles? Their response after their mission indicates that they do (see 10:17). Hence, what appears to be a failure on Jesus’ part to penetrate a gentile population on the east side of the lake turns into a bountiful harvest of souls (see the Notes on 8:26, 39; 10:7–8; the Analysis on 8:26–40; 10:1–12).

Certainly the biggest indicator of Jesus’ interest in Gentiles emerges in his call of the Seventy. The number itself points to the gentile nations, matching the number of names in the table of gentile nations (see Gen. 10).⁵⁰ To facilitate the Seventy’s mission, Jesus suspends kosher laws so that they can go among Gentiles: when they enter a gentile home, they are to eat and drink “such things as they give” and] “are set before [them]” (10:7–8). As modern scripture affirms, the Seventy are “called to preach the gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles” (D&C 107:25; see the Note on 10:1; the Analysis on 10:1–12). Hence, their mission signals Jesus’ intent to fold Gentiles into his kingdom.

Other passages add emphasis to this portrait. When Jesus wants to draw attention to his divine status, he chooses to cite the stories of the Queen of Sheba’s visit to Solomon and the Ninevites’ repentance at the preaching of the prophet Jonas (11:31–32; see the Notes thereon; the Analysis on 11:29–32). Besides this, the Joseph Smith Translation offers a final example. At 12:30, Jesus speaks of “the nations of the world” that seek for the necessities of life. At the end of this verse, the Prophet Joseph Smith adds an entire verse that, at its opening, highlights the disciples’ future mission among Gentiles: “And ye are sent unto them [the Gentiles] to be their ministers” (JST 12:33). Hence, long before these disciples go into the wide world carrying the message of their Savior, he points them precisely in that direction (see the Note on 12:30).

III. THE TEXT

50. S. Kent Brown, “The Seventy in Scripture,” in *By Study and also by Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh W. Nibley on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday (March 27, 1990)*, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1990), 1:25–45.

A. The Joseph Smith Translation

Latter-day Saints accept as inspired the changes that the Prophet Joseph Smith introduces into the text of the Bible, including titling the Gospels “Testimony.” He was under divine mandate to undertake an effort to go through the Bible and, under inspiration, to make changes and adjustments, producing “the scriptures . . . as they are in [the Lord’s] own bosom” (D&C 35:20).⁵¹ Latter-day Saints call this product the Joseph Smith Translation, though the term “translation” does not bear the sense of a translation from one language to another. Instead, it has to do with a fresh rendering of the text, only a few of whose new readings are to be found in ancient copies of the Bible. Notably, the first addition to Luke’s Gospel occurs in the opening verse of the King James Translation: “Forasmuch as many have taken in hand” (1:1). Before this expression Joseph Smith inserts, “*As I am a messenger of Jesus Christ, and knowing that many have taken in hand*” (JST 1:1; emphasis added). By this insertion, the Prophet Joseph emphasizes in clear fashion the value of Luke’s record because it comes from the hand of “a messenger of Jesus Christ.”

Generally, the most important alterations in Luke either add to or change the words of Jesus, offering to us a brimming cornucopia of his teachings. Others fill out the background of an episode reported by Luke, some offer interpretation, and still others augment the written account in other ways.⁵² We discuss all the important changes in the commentary that follows this introduction. But a few examples are in order here.

One of the most significant additions to Jesus’ words occurs in his commentary following his meeting with the rich young ruler (see 18:18–30). In effect, after warning about riches throughout his ministry, Jesus throws open the gates of heaven to the wealthy. But with provisos. In the KJV Translation, Jesus warns, “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!” (18:24). Even though a little later Jesus says, “The

51. Robert J. Matthews, “A Plainer Translation”: *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible, a History and Commentary* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1975), 3–4, 21–39; Robert L. Millet, “Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible: A Historical Overview,” in *The Joseph Smith Translation: The Restoration of Plain and Precious Things*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Robert L. Millet (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1985), 23–49; Robert J. Matthews, “Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible (JST),” in Daniel H. Ludlow and others, eds., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:763–69 (hereafter cited as *EM*).

52. Matthews, “Plainer Translation,” 323–54; Robert L. Millet, “The JST and the Synoptic Gospels: Literary Style,” in Nyman and Millet, *Joseph Smith Translation*, 147–62.

things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (18:27), there is little here to comfort the person of means. Then, leaving the former saying untouched, Joseph Smith introduces a stunning few words to Jesus’ latter saying and changes the whole tone: “It is impossible for them who trust in riches, to enter into the kingdom of God; but he who forsaketh the things which are of this world, it is possible with God, that he should enter in” (JST 18:27). Like a fresh breeze, these words elevate the possibilities for the wealthy to become part of God’s kingdom (see the Note on 18:27; the Analysis on 18:26–30).

In a second instance that speaks to our inner motives, especially when we are alone and unobserved by others, Joseph Smith adds crucial lines to the Parable of the Good Samaritan (see 10:25–37). As Luke records Jesus’ story, after the unnamed traveler is attacked and left for dead, “a certain priest . . . when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.” A Levite exhibits the same behavior and “passed by on the other side” (10:31–32). In summarizing the neglect demonstrated by these two religious leaders, the Prophet Joseph adds seventeen remarkable words of Jesus that uncover the leaders’ inner motivations and amplify their negligence: “for they desired in their hearts that it might not be known that they had seen him” (JST 10:33; see the Notes on 10:31–32; the Analysis on 10:25–37). These additional words strike at our motivations for turning away from someone in need.

A third example deals with the well-known act of speaking evil about the Son of Man. Jesus first addresses the twin matters of confessing and denying him: “Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God” (12:8–9). At this juncture, the Joseph Smith Translation adds two verses that illumine the reason for Jesus’ treatment of this subject—it has to do with the disciples’ public actions that are undermining Jesus’ ministry. “*Now his disciples knew that he said this, because they had spoken evil against him before the people; for they were afraid to confess him before men. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, He knoweth our hearts, and he speaketh to our condemnation, and we shall not be forgiven. But he answered them, and said unto them, Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man . . .*” (JST 12:10–12; emphasis added; see also JST Mark 14:36–37). To continue, in this classic passage, Jesus declares, “whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him” (12:10). To this, the Prophet Joseph Smith adds two clarifying words: “Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son

of man, *and repenteth*" (JST 12:12; emphasis added). Does Jesus leave a door open for his disciples to escape guilt? Yes, through repentance.

Among other types of changes we find simple additions that form a bridge between narratives. A good example appears at 14:25. Before this verse, Jesus rehearses a story about a "great supper" to a group gathered for a Sabbath meal (14:1, 16). After Luke's report of Jesus' words, Luke abruptly takes Jesus outside the home and records that "there went great multitudes with him" (14:25). The Joseph Smith Translation adds ten words, smoothing Jesus' movement from inside the home to his congregated disciples outside, and incidentally fills in a detail about Jesus' Sabbath activity that day: "And when he had finished these sayings, he departed thence" and taught his followers about discipleship (JST 14:25–28; see the Notes on 14:25–27).

In another example, we glimpse the youthful Jesus in the temple while his parents are frantically looking for him. When they finally locate him "in the temple, [he is] sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions" (2:46). The Joseph Smith Translation turns this scene on its head. Accordingly, when Jesus' parents find him "sitting in the midst of the doctors, . . . they were hearing him, and asking him questions" (JST 2:46). Jesus is not the learner but the teacher, even at a young age (see the Note on 2:46; the Analysis on 2:40–52).

We look at a final instance from the Gospel text, this one as Jesus hangs on the cross. All readers of the New Testament know the words that he utters while he is suspended between the two criminals: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (23:34). Commentators agree that Jesus gasps out these words in a final act of mercy toward those who conspire to bring him to this end: "the Jewish 'leaders' . . . those who were crucifying and mocking him."⁵³ But Joseph Smith adds an explanatory gloss—in parentheses—that abruptly changes this sense: "(Meaning the soldiers who crucified him)" (JST 23:35). Clearly, according to the addition, Jesus' forgiveness extends to the soldiers alone, not yet to the Jewish authorities who engineer his execution (see the Note on 23:34; the Analysis on 23:34–38).

We now turn to the matter of calling Luke's Gospel a "testimony," an issue noted in the first sentence of this section above. Not only does Joseph Smith retitl the New Testament Gospels as testimonies in the Joseph Smith Translation, a process begun in March 1831 (see D&C 45:60–62),

53. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1503–4; see also Plummer, *Luke*, 531; Morris, *Luke*, 357.

but the Lord retitles them too in a revelation given on December 27, 1832, when he calls John’s Gospel “the testimony of John” (D&C 88:3, 141). The model for such titling, of course, appears in the last lines of the fourth Gospel when, reading about the totality of that Gospel’s record, we see it called “his [John’s] testimony” (John 21:24; Greek *martyria*). This same Greek term appears in 1 John 5:9–11, translated variously in the KJV as “witness” and “record,” and points to the entirety of Jesus’ life and ministry.⁵⁴

When citing passages in the Joseph Smith Translation, I adopt the chapters and verses as published in *The Holy Scriptures: Inspired Version*.⁵⁵ This volume is widely available to readers and its numbering system is adopted in the “Joseph Smith Translation” excerpts in the back of the LDS edition of the Bible. I have not chosen the citation pattern adopted more recently in other compilations.⁵⁶

B. Modern Scripture’s Contribution

Above all hovers a sense that the basic story of Jesus in the New Testament Gospels is reliable and accurate, as several summarizing passages demonstrate (see 2 Ne. 6:9–11; 10:3–6; 25:12–14; Mosiah 13:33–35; Alma 7:10–12; 34:8–14). In one broad statement, the Resurrected Savior characterizes the Old and New Testaments as “that which the prophets and apostles have written” (D&C 52:9). In a moving, poetic passage from the Book of Mormon,⁵⁷ with more detail, we witness the sweep of Jesus’ life and ministry, beginning in premortality:

For behold,
 the time cometh,
 and is not far distant,
 that with power,
 the Lord Omnipotent
 who reigneth,

54. *TDNT*, 4:498, 500.

55. Joseph Smith Jr., *The Holy Scriptures: Inspired Version, Containing the Old and New Testaments, an Inspired Revision of the Authorized Version* (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1991).

56. Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible*; Thomas A. Wayment, ed., *The Complete Joseph Smith Translation of the New Testament: A Side-by-Side Comparison with the King James Version* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005).

57. S. Kent Brown, *Voices from the Dust: Book of Mormon Insights* (American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2004), 79–80.

who was,
and is
from all eternity to all eternity,
shall come down from heaven among the children of men,
and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay,
and shall go forth amongst men,
working mighty miracles,
such as healing the sick,
raising the dead,
causing the lame to walk,
the blind to receive their sight,
and the deaf to hear,
and curing all manner of diseases.
And he shall cast out devils,
or the evil spirits which dwell in the hearts of the children of men.
And lo, he shall suffer temptations,
and pain of body,
hunger,
thirst,
and fatigue,
even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death;
for behold, blood cometh from every pore,
so great shall be his anguish for
the wickedness
and the abominations of his people.
And he shall be called Jesus Christ,
the Son of God,
the Father of heaven and earth,
the Creator of all things from the beginning;
and his mother shall be called Mary.
And lo, he cometh unto his own,
that salvation might come unto the children of men
even through faith on his name;
and even after all this
they shall consider him a man,
and say that he hath a devil,
and shall scourge him,
and shall crucify him.
And he shall rise the third day from the dead;
and behold, he standeth to judge the world;
and behold, all these things are done

that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men.
(Mosiah 3:5–10)

Besides this broad endorsement of the Gospels' accounts, we come upon passages in the Book of Mormon that focus on specific scenes from Jesus' mortal experience (see Morm. 9:22–25). Concerning his suffering and death, we hear: “when the day cometh that the Only Begotten of the Father . . . shall manifest himself unto them in the flesh, behold, they will reject him. . . . Behold, they will crucify him; and after he is laid in a sepulchre for . . . three days he shall rise from the dead” (2 Ne. 25:12–13). These words of the prophet Nephi, uttered 600 years before Jesus' death, rest in part on written works not included in our Bibles: “the God of our fathers . . . yieldeth himself, according to the words of the angel, . . . into the hands of wicked men, to be lifted up, according to the words of Zenock, and to be crucified, according to the words of Neum, and to be buried in a sepulchre, according to the words of Zenos” (1 Ne. 19:10).

Matters do not end here. A number of Jesus' teachings which appear in other Gospels find their way into his visit to the New World, at least as many as Mormon records. Two brief examples will illustrate. First, the complete text of the Sermon on the Mount, with a few significant changes, appears in 3 Nephi 12–14, underscoring the authenticity of Jesus' sermon recorded in Matthew 5–7.⁵⁸ Second, the Resurrected Jesus quotes lines from John 10:16: “other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd” (3 Ne. 15:17, 21). Of course, his quotation shows that this saying is authentic. But there is more. For he explains to his New World hearers that, when in Palestine, he says nothing further about this subject to his Old World followers “because of stiffneckedness and unbelief” (3 Ne. 15:18). Moreover, the Old World disciples do not grasp his meaning because “they supposed it had been the Gentiles” who are to hear his voice, not comprehending that the Savior “should not manifest [himself] unto them save it were by the Holy Ghost” (3 Ne. 15:22–23). Here we catch a glimpse into the relationship between the mortal Jesus and his disciples: he obviously does not explain everything to them unless they ask. And part of their lack of curiosity rests on a lack of belief.

58. John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple and Sermon on the Mount: An Approach to 3 Nephi 11–18 and Matthew 5–7*, rev. ed. (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999).

On the other hand, a rich set of teachings to his disciples—many unrecorded in the Gospels—surfaces in the Doctrine and Covenants in revelations to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Here we learn that the Gospels do not present the whole story, whether because the Gospel writers do not know it or because they are abbreviating. We offer a few examples.

In a notable teaching, Jesus gives “the law” to his “ancient prophets and apostles” to “renounce war and proclaim peace” (D&C 98:16, 32). As he frames its modern formulation, they are to avoid lashing out at those who persecute them and their families, and to withstand abuse “patiently and revile not against them, neither seek revenge.” Remarkably, they are to weather any such mistreatment a second and a third time. Only after the fourth are they justified in initiating action against the enemy (D&C 98:23–38). The only teaching of Jesus reported in Luke’s Gospel that distantly resembles this “law” rises to view in a discussion about forgiving: “If thy brother trespass against thee, . . . and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day . . . [says] I repent; thou shalt forgive him” (see the Notes on 17:3–4; the Analysis on 17:1–4). The two teachings are not the same, but they breathe the same fragrance of forgiveness.

Concerning the intriguing terms “endless torment” and “eternal damnation,” the Lord says that, from a teaching episode while he is with them, “mine apostles” have known their meaning: “For, behold, I am endless,” says the Savior, “and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name.” In this light, “Eternal punishment is God’s punishment” and “Endless punishment is God’s punishment,” for “it is not written that there shall be no end to this torment” (D&C 19:6–12). Nothing of the sort appears in the Gospel accounts.

According to modern scripture, when the Savior introduces his sermon on the Mount of Olives after coming to Jerusalem for the last time, he wants to show to his Apostles “how the day of redemption shall come.” He then notes that the Twelve “have looked upon the long absence of your spirits from your bodies to be a bondage,” a misconception that he will correct by setting out “how the day of redemption shall come” (D&C 45:17). From this passage, it becomes evident that either Jesus knows their worries because of his divine ability to read their thoughts (see the Note on 5:22) or they share their fears with him in conversation. In either case, the New Testament Gospels preserve nothing from this concern of the Apostles.

In this connection, modern scripture offers a first-hand report of Jesus’ sermon on the Mount of Olives, one that he himself recalls (see D&C

45:16–59). In introducing this fresh rehearsal of the sermon, the Resurrected Lord says, “I stood before them [the disciples] in the flesh, and spake unto them” (D&C 45:16). This detail, not preserved by Luke, differs from the other accounts which record that “he sat upon the mount of Olives” when delivering the sermon (Matt. 24:3; Mark 13:3). In this light, modern scripture provides a modest but important correction, signaling other adjustments to follow. Furthermore, we learn why he chooses to give this sermon: “As ye [the disciples] have asked of me concerning the signs of my coming, in the day when I shall come in my glory in the clouds of heaven, to fulfil the promises that I have made unto your fathers” (D&C 45:16). Obviously, on prior occasions, not reported in the Gospels, his disciples have asked him about these seminal, future events. He now will answer them, adding details as he goes (see 21:5–36 and the Notes thereon).

When Peter, James, and John join Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, among other items that they witness, as narrated in modern scripture, they behold how “the earth shall be transfigured” at the end-time, at “the day of transfiguration.” This part of their experience does not appear in any of the Gospel narratives because “the fulness” of that experience “ye have not yet received” (D&C 63:20–21). We discover, therefore, that the New Testament Gospels do not record the complete event, nor does any other ancient source (see 2 Pet. 1:16–18). This point underlines the distinct possibility of other important omissions, including Jesus’ other trips to Jerusalem,⁵⁹ the salting of the large catch of fish, and Jesus’ extended stay with Zacchaeus (see the Notes on 5:6, 11; 9:22, 33; 10:30, 38; 13:34; 19:5, 47; 22:9; 23:5, 28, 50; 24:13). Only modern revelation alerts us to this fact (see the Analysis on 9:28–36).

In a passage that treats forgiveness, we learn from modern scripture that, sadly, Jesus’ “disciples, in days of old, sought occasion against one another and forgave not one another in their hearts” (D&C 64:8). Whether the Savior has in mind the disputation that arises during the Last Supper over “which of them should be accounted the greatest” (22:24) or another occasion we cannot know. It may be that the Apostles are not implicated but others from the entourage that follows Jesus, or still others from a later era (see 1 Cor. 1:11; 3:3; 11:16–22). But the disagreement is serious enough that “for this evil they were afflicted and sorely chastened” (D&C 64:8). Such an observation does not appear in the Gospel accounts.

59. Plummer, *Luke*, 290: “from a short trip to Jerusalem which Lk. does not mention”; and “it may also refer to previous visits of Jesus to the city” (521).

In another vein, modern scripture fills out one particular promise of Jesus to his Apostles: “I appoint unto you a kingdom,” he says to them, wherein they will “eat and drink at my table . . . and sit on thrones” (22:29–30; see the Notes thereon). It turns out that there are other, magnificent parts in this promise that have to do with Jesus’ Second Coming. From modern revelation we learn that these beloved, trusted men are the beneficiaries of “a firm decree,” issued by the Father, that “mine apostles, the Twelve which were with me [Jesus] in my ministry at Jerusalem, shall stand at my right hand at the day of my [second] coming.” Moreover, they will be standing “in a pillar of fire.” What is more, they will be “clothed with robes of righteousness, with crowns upon their heads,” bathed “in glory even as I am” (D&C 29:12). Soon after this moment, they will fill their prophesied role as judges.

Notably, the same passage sets out specific dimensions of Jesus’ promise that the Apostles will judge “the twelve tribes of Israel” (22:30), a promise that also appears, prophetically, in the Book of Mormon more than six hundred years before they are called, a fact that underlines the importance of their function as judges (see 1 Ne. 12:9). Explicitly, while “clothed with robes of righteousness,” they will “judge the whole house of Israel.” Modern scripture then defines who “the whole house of Israel” is—these are they who “have loved me [the Savior] and kept my commandments, and none else” (D&C 29:12). Thus, as scripture makes plain, the status as members of the “house of Israel” is hardly tied to lineage. Everything has to do with following the Savior; everything has to do with discipleship.

A final two points from modern scripture confirm the picture from the New Testament Gospels. First, before departing from his disciples, the Risen Jesus gives a charge to them, with promises, about their future ministries (see 24:47–49; Matt. 28:19–20; Mark 16:15–18; Acts 1:6–8). Quoting the Resurrected Christ, the Book of Mormon essentially confirms this scene, quoting almost exactly Mark 16:15–18 (see Morm. 9:22–24). But the Doctrine and Covenants adds considerably to the words of the Risen Jesus as he departs from his disciples. For example, in words not recorded elsewhere, the Lord says to the Apostles, “every soul who believeth on your words, and is baptized by water for the remission of sins, shall receive the Holy Ghost.” In the realm of miracles, he promises that “In my name they [his disciples] shall open the eyes of the blind, and unstop the ears of the deaf; And the tongue of the dumb shall speak.” None of these miraculous manifestations receives mention in another source. Further, the Resurrected Savior repeats a caution that he gives to the Apostles: “they shall

not boast themselves of these things, neither speak them before the world” (D&C 84:64, 69–70, 73). This command to be quiet about these promises and instructions may be one reason that they appear nowhere in other scripture.

Second, according to Luke 24:49, the Risen Savior instructs the eleven to “tarry . . . in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” They are not to leave, even if they have pressing business elsewhere. Instead, they are to make themselves available for his instruction concerning “the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,” instruction that will occur during the forty-day period following his resurrection (Acts 1:3). Then they will “be endued with power from on high” at Pentecost (see Acts 2:1–42). This directive, though seemingly minor, is so important that the Lord draws attention to this former command when directing Joseph Smith to remain in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1833 (see D&C 95:9; the Note on 24:49).

C. Unity of the Gospel

Many commentators unbind Luke’s Gospel and wrap it into two parts. The first consists of chapters 1 and 2; the second ties together chapters 3 through 24. This view arises largely because of the distinctive character of the first two chapters—they link to a different spirit from what we find in the later chapters because of the presence of “Semiticisms,” and exhibit a dependance on sources not relied on elsewhere in Luke’s report. Thus, chapter 3, for some, forms the formal opening of the Gospel story with chapters 1 and 2 a later addition.⁶⁰ Although positing such a separation may rest on careful analysis, threads of unity prove that the two parts stand together and are divided only artificially. The strongest threads consist of multiple occurrences of a characteristic known as *inclusio*, most often a distinctive term or phrase that appears only at the opening of a work and then near its end, signaling a bridging literary tie from beginning to end. Actually, the number of such expressions are too numerous to discuss. I count at least twenty-one such unifying links.⁶¹ Three examples will put a wrap on this literary device.

60. Beare, *Earliest Records of Jesus*, 33; Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1979), 239–43; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:288, 309–13.

61. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 124–47, 366–67, 388, 390–93. The twenty-one instances of *inclusio* are: the temple, begins as place of revelation and ends damaged by God (1:9, 21, 22; 23:45); Mary’s offering of the poor (2:24) and in the gift of the poor

The pointer to the temple, specifically the sanctuary (Greek *naos*),⁶² frames one of the earliest examples of an *inclusio*. In Zacharias's duties as a priest, he enters the sanctuary to kindle the incense, the only time that he will perform this act in his lifetime. Hence, Luke is drawing our attention to a special occasion that takes place only in the sanctuary (see 1:9, 21, 22; the Note on 1:9). The word *naos* appears again near the end of Luke's Gospel when he writes about another scene in the sanctuary, this one of an entirely different character: "the veil of the temple [sanctuary] was rent in the midst" (23:45). Thus, Luke takes us into the sanctuary, next to the veil, on two occasions and tells us of hopeful revelation in the first case and of God's unhappy hand in the second (see the Note on 23:45). As an added note, even though Luke draws attention to the temple in other passages throughout his Gospel, the Greek word is not the same (*hieron*) and refers to the whole temple complex (see 2:37, 46; 4:9; 19:45; etc.; the Note on 2:27).⁶³

An unusual *inclusio* manifests itself in the actions of women, specifically actions that follow an encounter with angels. In the first, Mary goes off to see her distant cousin Elisabeth after the angel visits her. The angel does not tell her to go, but Mary clearly senses an imperative that she do so when the angel informs her that "thy cousin Elisabeth . . . hath also

widow (21:2–4); the Twelve/eleven (6:13; 24:9, 33); the centurions (7:2, 6; 23:47); the Women (8:2–3; 23:49, 55–27:10); obedience to law by those tied to the beginning of Jesus' story and end of his life (the Notes on 1:6; 23:56); Greek verb *eiserchomai* ("to enter") for Zacharias's entry into sanctuary (1:9), the angel's approach to Mary (1:28), Mary's entry into "house of Zacharias" (1:40), and the Risen Jesus' entry into the home at Emmaus where he breaks bread and discloses himself (24:29); calling certain individuals *dikaïos* (1:6; 2:25; 23:47, 50; Notes on 1:6 and 23:50); the same verb (*prosdechomai*, "to wait for") for Simeon and Joseph of Arimathea (Notes on 2:25; 23:51); "ointment" (Greek *myron*) at 7:37–38, 46, and 23:56 (Note on 7:37); appearance of angels (1:11, 26; 2:9; 24:4 [JST 24:2], 23); expression "sinful man/men" (5:8; 24:7); Simon Peter (4:38; 5:3; 22:54ff.; 24:12; Note on 24:34); the action of Mary who visits Elisabeth and the women who carry news about the resurrection, all motivated by the words of angels (Notes on 1:39; 24:9); emphasis on the "heart" as the seat of understanding (see the Notes on 2:19 and 24:25); the verb *dianoigō* "to open" in 2:23; 24:31, 32, 45 (see the Notes thereon); the Coming One baptizes "with fire" (3:16) and the two disciples' hearts "burn" (24:32); "troubled" (verb *tarassō*) at 1:12 and 24:38—see cognate *diatarassō* at 1:29; the term "flesh" (*sarx*) at 3:6 and 24:39; the phrase "from on high" at 1:78 and 24:49; passive form *ōphthē* "was seen" at 1:11 (angel is seen by Zacharias), at 22:43 (angel is seen by Jesus in Gethsemane) and 24:34 (Risen Jesus is seen by Peter).

62. *TDNT*, 4:885.

63. BAGD, 373; *TDNT*, 3:232–33, 235.

conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her” (1:36). In the second scene the women at the empty tomb sense an imperative in the words of the angels who tell them, “He [Jesus] is not here, but is risen” (24:6). In response, they “returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest” (24:9). Thus, they become first-rank eyewitnesses of the resurrection.⁶⁴ Plainly, both Mary and the women disciples from Galilee act on a similar impulse—they grasp that the words of the angels give them specific direction. And they respond accordingly (see the Notes on 1:39; 24:9).

The third example has to do with a verb. The passive form of the verb *horaō*, which is *ōphthē*, meaning “was seen,”⁶⁵ occurs in three passages: at 1:11 when the angel is seen by Zacharias, at 22:43 when the angel is seen by Jesus in Gethsemane, and at 24:34 when the Risen Lord is seen by Peter. The King James translators render all three as “appeared,” emphasizing the sense that the celestial being does the appearing to the mortal person. But the verb’s passive form communicates this sense only lightly. Rather, the emphasis rests fully on the direct sensory perception of the mortal individual, that is, on Zacharias who sees the angel, on Jesus who sees the angel, and on Peter who sees the Resurrected Christ. Particularly in the reports of the Resurrected Savior coming to disciples, Luke skirts the language of visions or dreams and, instead, stresses the unmediated physical encounter, as these three passages illustrate (see the Notes on 1:11; 22:43; 24:34).⁶⁶ This emphatic language appears only at the beginning of Luke’s Gospel and near its end, framing a notable *inclusio*.

D. The Framework

Luke constructs the framework of his record from the major themes that he hammers together from the Savior’s activities and teachings as well as, briefly, from John the Baptist. We take notice of the following broad outline.

1. Infancy narratives (1:1–2:52)
2. John the Baptist and the Genealogy of Jesus through his father (3:1–38)
4. Galilean Ministry (4:1–9:50)
5. Journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:48)

64. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 304.

65. BAGD, 581–82.

66. *TDNT*, 5:317, 342, 356.

6. From the Temple Cleansing to the Ascension (20:1–24:53)

Luke's reports of the infancy stories and the journey to Jerusalem shape the two most distinctive elements. Otherwise, he follows the widely accepted pattern to portray Jesus' life and ministry, especially as Mark, the earliest written Gospel, frames it. In the infancy narrative, of course, Luke shares an interest with Matthew for rehearsing events that impact Jesus' parents and then the child Jesus. But Luke steers a different course when highlighting those events. For instance, according to Matthew the earliest divine communication comes to Joseph after he finds himself in a quandary about Mary's newly disclosed pregnancy (see Matt. 1:18–21). Luke, on the other hand, pushes forward the angel's visits to Zacharias and Mary as the divine disclosures of God's intentions to bring about his long-awaited purposes through the infants John and Jesus. According to Matthew, the most notable visitors to the child Jesus and his parents are the "wise men from the east" (see Matt. 2:1–12). Luke's story emphasizes not prominence but humility in recounting the visit of shepherds to see the new-born Jesus (see 2:8–17). Matthew's hands fashion no early connection between the parents of the two children whereas Luke writes about not only the family relationship between the mothers but especially Mary's extended visit to Elisabeth (see 1:36, 39–56). Contrarily, Luke seems to know nothing of Jesus' family's long stay in Egypt (see the Note on 2:39 and the Analysis on 2:36–39) whereas Matthew rehearses the flight of Joseph and Mary to Egypt that lasts until the angel announces to Joseph that "they are dead which sought the young child's life" (Matt. 2:20).⁶⁷ In this light, we conclude that Luke and Matthew draw from entirely different streams of information. And even though scholars accuse them of making up much of what they report, little compelling reason exists to believe that they create these infancy stories from whole cloth. Rather, they are faithful recorders of what comes to them.⁶⁸

Luke's narrative of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem is unique (see 9:51–19:48). According to Luke, Jesus breaks off his Galilean ministry and takes up an extended, meandering journey through towns and villages, with Jerusalem as his goal: "when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem" (9:51). As he goes from place to place, he "sent messengers" to announce his arrival (9:52). After all, Jesus will pass through these towns only once and he seeks to maximize

67. Brown, *Mary and Elisabeth*, 61–62.

68. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 114–47, 288–89, 293–98, 300–318, 417–18.

his contact with citizens (see 9:57; 10:38; 13:22; 14:25; 17:11; 18:31, 35; 19:1, 28; the Notes on 9:51–52). Hints exist in modern scripture that this sending forth of messengers becomes a pattern that Jesus' Apostles will imitate as they establish the early church: "take with you those who are ordained unto the lesser priesthood, and send them before you to make appointments, and to prepare the way. . . . Behold, this is the way that mine apostles, in ancient days, built up my church unto me" (D&C 84:107–8). Not incidentally, such words point to the authenticity of what Luke describes when introducing Jesus' journey to Jerusalem.

Luke's record of the journey refines and greatly expands the accounts that track Jesus' travels into Perea on the east side of the Jordan River before he turns to Jerusalem for the last time (see Matt. 19:1–20:16; Mark 10:1–31).⁶⁹ But he preserves only two incidents from this part of Jesus' ministry, as Matthew and Mark report it, the blessing of children and the encounter with the rich young ruler (see 18:15–30; Matt. 19:13–30; Mark 10:13–27). Remarkably, within the journey account, Luke repeats a number of Jesus' sayings and stories that we find in other contexts and in somewhat dissimilar language, as Matthew and Mark rehearse them. Naturally, the question arises whether Luke moves these items to a new yet artificial context or whether he is setting out instances wherein Jesus essentially repeats a parable or story to a completely different audience and, after adjusting it, makes a fresh point.

E. Repeated Sayings

For many commentators, similar sayings and stories in the Gospels are mere variants of one another. The only mystery to solve is to determine the earliest form of a particular saying or story as the Gospels preserve it. Form critics have tried their hand at this task and their efforts fail to convince much of their audience. An approach with promise holds to a view that Jesus utters similar words to separate audiences and adjusts his teachings to their needs.⁷⁰ A few examples will illustrate.

Let's start with the parable of the pounds (see 19:11–27) and a similar story, the parable of the talents (see Matt. 25:14–30). It is widely trumpeted that these parables simply represent different versions of one another that

69. Aharoni and others, *Carta Bible Atlas*, map 237.

70. Plummer, *Luke*, xxviii–xxix; see also *TDNT*, 2:631; 4:326; Jeremias, *Parables*, 202; Marshall, *Luke*, 701; Morris, *Luke*, 245–46, 299; Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 286.

the Gospel writers, or early church members, adjust to suit their needs.⁷¹ But the variations between them are substantial, including the settings. In Matthew, Jesus utters the parable of the talents as a part of his discourse on the Mount of Olives. In Luke, he tells the parable of the pounds in or near Jericho in order to correct a crowd's misplaced expectation that the kingdom of God will appear when Jesus sets foot in Jerusalem (see the Note on 19:11; the Analysis on 19:11–27). Further, the sheer number of differences in detail between the two parables, such as the main character in each, lead to the natural conclusion that Jesus tells similar stories that carry targeted messages to different audiences on different occasions.⁷²

From the sayings on forgiving others, Matthew records that Jesus presses upon Peter the precept that he forgive another person up to “seventy times seven” (Matt. 18:22). According to Luke, Jesus makes a similar statement when teaching a general principle about those who trespass against us: “if [the trespasser] trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him” (17:4). Here too, although the sayings share the number seven, the settings differ completely and Jesus' words vary sharply from one telling to the other. We conclude, therefore, that Jesus utters the sayings on two different occasions (see the Analysis on 17:1–4).⁷³

From Jesus, Luke records two sayings about lighting lamps and putting them on lampstands (see 8:16; 11:33; the Notes thereon). We find similar sayings in the other two synoptic Gospels (see Matt. 5:15; Mark 4:21). In two cases, Jesus makes a point about bringing dark acts to light: “nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known” (8:17; also Mark 4:22). In both cases, the sayings follow the parable of the sower and its explanation. Hence, they derive from the same source, with the real possibility that Luke is here copying from Mark. The other versions of the saying differ totally both in setting and in application. According to Matthew, after Jesus introduces the image of the lamp during the Sermon on the Mount, he then says that his followers are to let their “light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify

71. For example, Rudolph Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 2d ed., trans. John Marsh (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 176, 195–96; Charles Harold Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, rev. ed. (London: Collins, 1961), 108–14; Beare, *Earliest Records of Jesus*, 201–3; Jeremias, *Parables*, 58–63.

72. Plummer, *Luke*, xxviii–xxix, 437; *TDNT*, 2:631; 4:326; Jeremias, *Parables*, 122; Marshall, *Luke*, 701; Morris, *Luke*, 299; Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 283–86.

73. *TDNT*, 2:631, n. 29.

your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16). In Luke’s record, Jesus brings up lamps after discussing signs of the end-time (see 11:29–33). He next compares the light from a glowing lamp to our inner light: “The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness” (11:34). Plainly, Matthew and Luke record similar sayings of Jesus who, on the spot, makes different applications of the sayings. They are not the same.⁷⁴ Instead, we reckon with the likelihood that Jesus, a superb teacher, does not repeat an important teaching merely once; in their turns, the Gospel writers hand us different versions of what he says. Like all skilled teachers, Jesus repeats similar stories, with variations, and applies them to different situations that his disciples will face.⁷⁵

We find a similar situation when we look at Jesus’ important Sermon on the Mount of Olives (see 21:5–36; the Note on 21:7). According to Matthew and Mark, virtually all of Jesus’ teachings in this sermon occur only on the mount and nowhere else (see Matt. 24–25; Mark 13). But Luke records words of Jesus that he speaks on two occasions—both before and during the sermon. First, in a preface to that sermon Jesus warns that, specifically at the temple, “the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (21:6; see Matt. 24:2; Mark 13:2). Three or four days before this scene, according to Luke, as Jesus sits astride a donkey at the summit of the Mount of Olives (see 19:41), he likewise warns that “the days shall come upon thee [the city of Jerusalem], that thine enemies . . . shall lay thee even with the ground, . . . and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another” (19:43–44). Here Jesus utters similar words, this time aiming them at the city itself.

Next, in the same sermon delivered to the Apostles atop the Mount of Olives, Jesus predicts that witnesses “shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies,” and will see its “desolation” following soon thereafter (21:20), a prophecy Matthew and Mark tie to “the abomination of desolation” that appears “where it ought not” (Matt. 24:15–16; Mark 13:14). Notably, a few days before, while sitting on the same donkey on the top of the Mount of Olives, Jesus says that Jerusalem’s “enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side” (19:43). This latter prophecy, uttered in the presence of a large multitude, not just

74. *TDNT*, 4:326.

75. Plummer, *Luke*, xxviii–xxix, 437; *TDNT*, 2:631; 4:326; Jeremias, *Parables*, 202; Marshall, *Luke*, 701; Morris, *Luke*, 299; Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 283–86.

the Apostles, is intended to send a warning to the citizens of the city and countryside, as is the later prophecy spoken to the women of Jerusalem (see 23:28–30). If they will hear, all the better for them. The prediction that Jesus shares with his Apostles in his Sermon on the Mount of Olives is aimed at men who will pay close attention to his words, with the happy result that the Christians in the city will escape the ravages of the Roman army that are heaped on Jerusalem in AD 70 (see the Notes on 19:43–44; 21:20; 23:28; the Analysis on 19:41–44).

Among the hallmarks of the Sermon on the Mount of Olives stand Jesus' words about the unexpected arrival of the Son of Man (see 21:34–36; Matt. 24:42–44; Mark 13:32–37). But as Luke records matters, Jesus speaks about this approaching event long before he arrives in the capital city. In a series of stories that deal with readiness (see 12:35–59), he holds up in parable form—“ye yourselves [are] like unto men that wait for their lord” (12:36)—an illustration about being prepared: “if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched. . . . Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not” (12:39–40). This saying is almost identical to what we find in Matthew 24:43–44, within the report of the Sermon on the Mount of Olives. Do we therefore conclude that Luke moves this saying to this earlier context in chapter 12? Not at all. First, as we have already noted, Jesus the teacher does not simply utter a principle or teaching once, expecting followers to recall what he says from that one occasion.⁷⁶

A second point is even more significant. It has to do with the Joseph Smith Translation. Simply stated, the JST affirms the authenticity of this saying in its present context, even adding emphasis to the principle of readiness. For example, the JST introduces the expression, “Verily I say unto you,” just before “Blessed are those servants, whom the lord . . . shall find watching,” lending authority that what follows in verses 12:39–40 (12:37; JST 12:40). In addition, a completely revised verse is attached to 12:37 that discloses multiple arrivals of the Savior in this world, all occurring at night and thereby signaling the need for readiness: “For behold, he cometh in the first watch of the night, and he shall also come in the second watch, and again he shall come in the third watch” (JST 12:41). Another new saying of Jesus appears after 12:38. Within it we read words that underscore his sudden arrival: “And now, verily I say these things unto you, that ye may know this, that the coming of the Lord is as a thief in the night” (JST 12:44).

76. Marshall, *Luke*, 537.

This new saying is then further augmented with a warning from Jesus that, against the one who “watcheth not his goods, the thief cometh in an hour of which he is not aware, and taketh his goods, and divideth them among his fellows” (JST 12:45). But Joseph Smith is not finished. He makes it clear that it is the disciples, not Jesus, who, grasping Jesus’ point, “said among themselves, If the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come” (12:39; JST 12:46). Plainly, all of these changes underline the authenticity of Jesus’ saying, in this place and on this occasion, about readiness (see the Analysis on 12:35–40).

F. Relationship to the Book of Acts

The same author writes both this Gospel and the book of Acts. All commentators share this conclusion, even if a few are unwilling to call the writer by the name Luke. He thus stands as the author of fully one-quarter of the New Testament. The unity of the two books manifests itself initially in the dedication of Luke’s works to a man named Theophilus, a Roman official who is likely the patron who pays for the publication of Luke’s volumes (see 1:3; Acts 1:1; the Note on 1:3).⁷⁷ As already noted, in modern scholarship, the study of Luke and Acts together forms a standard approach.⁷⁸

The relationship between the two works runs deep. Simple matters such as the same interests, or vocabulary and verbal expressions—these latter items are often unusual among New Testament writings—appear regularly within the Gospel and book of Acts, confirming a single hand and mind that composes both.⁷⁹ For instance, Luke brings forward Abraham as the person in whom family ties and covenant relationships and salvation all meet.⁸⁰ In contrast, Mark mentions Abraham once (see Mark 12:26) and three of Matthew’s seven references occur in his opening genealogy (see Matt. 1:1, 2, 17). Another important unifying theme has to do with respect for law, a characteristic of those tied to the beginning of the Christian movement, often in contrast to fellow Jews (see 2:4–5, 22, 24, 27, 39, 42, 51; 4:16; Acts

77. Morris, *Luke*, 15–17, 74; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:3–4, 8; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 3 (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1991), 1, 28–29.

78. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn, eds., *Studies in Luke–Acts: Essays Presented in Honor of Paul Schubert* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966); Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:3–8.

79. Johnson, *Luke*, 3.

80. Luke 1:55, 73; 3:8, 34; 13:16, 28; 16:22–25, 29–30; 19:9; 20:37; Acts 3:13, 25; 7:2, 16–17, 32; 13:26; Nils A. Dahl, “The Story of Abraham in Luke–Acts,” in Keck and Martyn, *Studies in Luke–Acts*, 139–58.

13:45, 50; 14:19; 17:5, 13; the Notes on 1:6; 23:56). A further unifying feature consists of Luke's universalism, his interest in Gentiles and Jesus' outreach to them and, later, Paul's mission among them. As we have seen, this theme appears first in the words of Simeon who meets Jesus' parents in the temple and, while cradling the infant in his arms, speaks of God's "salvation . . . prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles" (2:31–32; see the Note 2:31). In vocabulary matters, as an example, Luke prefers the Greek term *enōpion* to express the sense of "before" or "in the presence of"⁸¹ in contrast to the common *emprosthen*⁸² which Matthew and Mark use exclusively with the same meanings.

G. Relationship to Gospel of Mark

The word "complex" represents accurately the relationship between the Gospels of Mark and Luke. Most commentators hold that Luke copies much of Mark and a second source, "Q" (from the German word *Quelle*, "source"), rather slavishly, introducing changes—at times, major changes—that suit his purposes.⁸³ In contrast, I judge that Luke draws directly from Mark only a little, almost as an afterthought, as if he already possesses a draft of his Gospel when he first sees Mark. Luke certainly takes material from Mark because the latter's Gospel is most likely the first written and is tied to the reminiscences of Peter, thus bearing his authority.⁸⁴ Indeed, Luke acknowledges that "many have taken in hand to set forth" accounts of Jesus' life and ministry, implying that he draws from those reports, written and oral, which must include Mark (1:1). But for the most part, when the accounts of Mark and Luke intersect, enough differences stand out that point to Luke learning his stories often from other sources.⁸⁵ A brief review will illustrate.

81. Twenty-six occurrences in Luke–Acts: 1:6, 15, 17, 19, 75; 4:7; 5:18, 25; 8:47; 12:6, 9; 13:26; 14:10; etc.; Acts 2:25; 4:10, 19; 6:5, 6; 7:46; 8:21; 9:15; etc.; Marshall, *Luke*, 516.

82. Eleven occurrences in Luke–Acts: 5:19; 7:27; 10:21; 12:8 (twice); 14:2; 19:4, 27, 28; 21:36; Acts 18:17.

83. For instance, Beare, *Earliest Records of Jesus*, 14–15; William Barclay, *The First Three Gospels* (London: SCM Press, 1966), 120–22; Bultmann, *History*, 1; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:66–72, 75–81.

84. S. Kent Brown, "The Testimony of Mark," in *Studies in Scripture, Volume Five: The Gospels*, ed. Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986), 61–87; Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 155–82.

85. Caird, *Luke*, 17–27.

Luke's major omission of Marcan materials occurs at 9:17–18 where, at first glance, he appears to skip Mark 6:45–8:26. Within these verses, Mark rehearses the story of Jesus' visit to Tyre and Sidon, gentile towns north of Galilee, and his healing of a Syrophenician woman's daughter (see Mark 7:24–30). As we notice earlier, if Luke is carefully following Mark's Gospel, this omission is most puzzling, mainly because it fits neatly with his interest in narrating Jesus' outreach to Gentiles. Similarly, in the account of the cleansing of the temple, Luke does not preserve the phrase "of all nations" from Jesus' words that appears in Mark's report: "Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer?" (Mark 11:17; quoting LXX Isa. 56:7). If Luke is reproducing Mark's text, the omission is glaring, knowing of Luke's deep interest in Gentiles (see the Notes on 2:31–32; 19:46).

But omissions are not the whole story. Far from it. Let us begin with the calling and announcing of the Twelve, a pivotal event. According to Mark, Jesus ascends "a mountain" and chooses "twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach" (Mark 3:13–14). Immediately after he sets them apart, he and they "went into an house" where they are besieged by a "multitude . . . so that they could not so much as eat bread" (Mark 3:19–20). Luke's picture differs almost totally. It does portray Jesus ascending "a mountain," but specifically, Jesus goes there "to pray, and [he] continued all night in prayer to God" (6:12). After praying about and for the Twelve through the night, and likely for others who oppose him the day before (see the Note on 6:12), he chooses the Twelve and then descends with them to "the plain" where he will heal afflicted persons and give a landmark sermon (see 6:13–49). The appearance of the Twelve at his side signals to his audience that they belong to him. In a word, it forms the public announcement of the organization of his church (see the Notes on 6:13, 17; the Analysis on 6:13–16; 6:17–19; 9:1–6).

In a second important case, Luke narrates Jesus' cleansing of the temple very differently from how Mark recounts events. Both Gospel writers hold that Jesus arrives in the capital city late in the day, certainly a Sunday afternoon (see the Note on 19:5). For Mark, Jesus enters the temple and "looked round about upon all things." Afterward, "he went out unto Bethany with the twelve" (Mark 11:11). Only "on the morrow" do "they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple," not even permitting anyone to "carry any vessel through the temple" (Mark 11:12, 15–16). Thus Jesus waits until Monday to undertake his drastic action. In contrast, Luke writes that, when Jesus

arrives at the city on Sunday afternoon, he “went [directly] into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought” (19:45). Hence, Jesus’ actions are immediate and straightforward, the actions of a king coming to his city (see the Notes on 19:5, 45; the Analysis on 19:1–10; 19:28–40; 19:45–48).

The Words of Institution, as they are known, spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper, a key moment in his ministry, differ notably from Mark to Luke. According to Mark, Jesus breaks the bread and then says, “Take, eat: this is my body.” At the end of the meal, after lifting his own cup of wine and giving thanks and handing it to his disciples, he utters the words, “This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many” (Mark 14:22–24). Luke’s report, by contrast, agrees closely with the Apostle Paul’s record, the earliest account, but not with Mark. According to Luke, after breaking the bread and giving it to the disciples, Jesus declares, “This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me” (22:19; see the Note thereon). Paul preserves the imperatives from Mark, “Take, eat,” but then repeats exactly the words of the Savior as they appear in Luke, with one exception: “this is my body, which is *broken* for you: this do in remembrance of me” (1 Cor. 11:24; emphasis added). But here, the verb “broken” (Greek participle *klōmenon*), although it points to Jesus’ act of breaking the bread, does not appear in the best and earliest manuscripts of First Corinthians and is therefore suspect, bringing Paul’s report closer to that of Luke.⁸⁶

Concerning the wine in the cup, Luke writes the words of Jesus thus: “This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you” (22:20). Clearly, Mark’s report focuses on the wine (“This is my blood,” Mark 14:24), Luke’s on the cup (see the Note on 22:20). Even so, the two reports are rather close. Importantly, Paul’s record expands Jesus’ last expression as it appears in Luke, “which is shed for you,” to “this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me” (1 Cor. 11:25). In this light, what can we conclude? First, Luke’s account of Jesus’ words stands close to the earliest report from Paul. Second, Luke’s rehearsal does not rest on Mark’s narration. Rather, it is independent (see the Analysis on 22:14–20). I suspect that Luke’s long association with Paul informs their mutually compatible reports.⁸⁷

86. Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), 545, n. 2.

87. Caird, *Luke*, 19, 27.

A final example comes from the crucial scene wherein Jesus is hailed before a hastily called council of Jewish officials after his arrest (see 22:63–71). Luke shares only a few details with Mark (see Mark 14:53, 55–65). All else is unique to his report, encouraging us to conclude that his account rests on other information. Of course, a few points of similarity exist. For instance, in 22:63 Luke writes that “the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him.” Mark also paints a scene of the arresting party roughing Jesus up. Specifically, like Luke, Mark records that someone covers Jesus’ face; like Luke, Mark writes that the crowd clamors for a prophecy from Jesus (see the Notes on 22:63–64; Mark 14:65). But the differences are too many to theorize Luke borrowing from Mark. For example, according to Mark, the authorities accuse Jesus of blasphemy. In a reversal, Luke writes that those holding Jesus speak blasphemously (see the Note on 22:65; Mark 14:64). Further, Luke reports that the hearing occurs in “their council” room and that “it was day” (22:66) whereas Mark implies that it all takes place earlier, “in the morning” (Mark 15:1). Moreover, Mark narrates the high priest’s dramatic ripping of his robes and his shouted charge that Jesus utters blasphemy, pieces of the story that Luke seems not to know from his source (see Mark 14:63–64).⁸⁸ In addition, Mark goes on at length about the arrival and impotence of false witnesses, a set of scenes that Luke does not include (see the Note on 22:71; Mark 14:55–59). In the end, the one witness who matters is the Savior, a fact that Luke stresses. The one person in charge is Jesus (see the Analysis on 22:63–71). To reach these observations, Luke draws on a source other than Mark,⁸⁹ or he willfully makes wholesale changes, a view that does not harmonize with him as an authorized “messenger of Jesus Christ” (JST 1:1).

H. Relationship to Gospel of Matthew

As in the prior section on Mark’s Gospel, the relationship between Matthew’s record and Luke’s bristles with complexity. And it is beyond the scope of this study to explore this relationship at length. The possible connections are made complex in part because of the theorized existence of a written document called “Q,” a source that some believe lies behind stories and sayings that Luke and Matthew seem to have in common with each

88. Dana M. Pike, “Before the Jewish Authorities,” in *From the Last Supper through the Resurrection: The Savior’s Final Hours*, ed. Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Thomas A. Wayment (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 218–21.

89. Caird, *Luke*, 26.

other but no one else. This source is thought to consist of more than two hundred verses shared between the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.⁹⁰ One major problem with this view has to do with the lack of copies of such a document from antiquity. None exist (see the Analysis on 9:1–6; 9:51–56).

A large number of passages that Matthew and Luke share arises in the Sermon on the Mount (see Matt. 5–7) and the Sermon on the Plain (see 6:20–49), sermons that some believe are variants of one another.⁹¹ In spots, the similarities are intriguing. For example, at the beginning of each sermon Jesus repeats a series of beatitudes (see 6:20–23; Matt. 5:3–12). Further, one of Jesus' main messages moves love of enemies into the foreground (see 6:27–35; Matt. 5:43–47). Moreover, when speaking of our relationships to others, he appeals to us to turn our other cheek to the one who slaps us on the face (see 6:29; Matt. 5:39–40), and then he draws us to the contrast between a speck in another person's eye and the beam or log that is jammed into our own eye and blocks our sight (see 6:41–42; Matt. 7:3–5). Finally, he ends the sermons by appealing to the image of the wise man and foolish man who build their homes on solid and loose foundations respectively (see 6:48–49; Matt. 7:24–27). But the similarities do not take us much farther. The differences do. As I read the two texts, both the locales and the content differ substantially (see the Analysis on 6:20–49).

Concerning locations, Matthew writes that Jesus “went up into a mountain.” When he is ready, “his disciples” join him to hear his words (Matt. 5:1). This setting matches most places on the north end of the Sea of Galilee where the hills rise abruptly only a few hundred yards north of the shoreline. Such an area does not match Luke's words about “the plain” where Jesus delivers a major sermon to a huge, diverse crowd, not just to his disciples (6:17; see JST Matt. 7:1). Instead, we think of the wide, flat region that runs along the northwest shore of the lake, extending to high cliffs to the west, now called the Valley of Ginosar. Here is the most natural setting for the Sermon on the Plain, a mere three miles west of Capernaum, after Jesus comes down from a night spent in prayer on a mountain (see the Notes on 6:12, 13, 17). In a word, the two sermons tie to different locales that lie three or so miles apart.

Concerning content, the two sermons lack basic links to each other. The beatitudes, for instance, are completely different and carry dissimilar messages. In Matthew, they set out Jesus' fundamental expectations for his

90. Caird, *Luke*, 17–19; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:75–81.

91. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:627–32; Johnson, *Luke*, 110–112.

followers (see Matt. 5:3–12). In Luke, Jesus' words offer needed comfort and promise to those who suffer reversals in this life (see the Notes on 6:20–23). According to Luke's record, Jesus follows the beatitudes with a series of woes against those who believe incorrectly that the prosperous circumstances of their lives are a reward of some sort (see the Notes on 6:24–26). Matthew records no such statements.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew gives a lot of space to Jesus' words on alms and prayers and fasts (see Matt. 6:1–18). Significantly, in this section of the sermon Jesus is asking us to consider why we do what we do in a setting of faith. He lifts up the ever-present question of noisy, public style versus quiet, personal worship. Nothing of this kind appears in Luke's record of the Sermon on the Plain. To be sure, according to Luke, Jesus repeats the Lord's prayer and sayings about basic needs and treasures, all themes found in Matthew's account, but in a totally different setting, an observation that suggests another source and another occasion (see 11:1–4; 12:22–34; the Analysis on 11:1–4; 12:22–34; Matt. 6:9–14, 19–21, 25–34).

In the journey section (see 9:51–19:48), Luke repeats items that Matthew also features. But in many cases, the differences point to occasions that are not the same. For example, when we turn to the parable of the Great Supper (see 14:16–24), we find ourselves face to face with a story retold in similar words in Matthew (see Matt. 22:1–14). For Luke, Jesus repeats the parable during his journey to Jerusalem and while reclining as a dinner guest in “the house of one of the chief Pharisees” (14:1). According to Matthew, he recites the story as he teaches in the temple after arriving in Jerusalem (see Matt. 21:23). For Luke, the host in the parable is “a certain [unnamed] man” and the occasion remains unspecified (14:16). According to Matthew, the host is “a certain king” and the occasion is the “marriage for his son” (Matt 22:2). For Luke, the invited guests simply make excuses to the one servant whom the host sends to remind them of the supper (see 14:17–20). According to Matthew, some of the invited guests treat the king's servants—plural—shamefully and kill them, bringing his wrath upon themselves (see Matt. 22:5–7). For Luke, the host fills up his home specifically with “the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind” (14:21; see the Notes on 14:13, 21). According to Matthew, the king fills the banquet room in the palace with “both bad and good . . . guests” (Matt. 22:10). For Luke, one of Jesus' conclusions is that the kingdom is open to “the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind” (14:13; see the Notes on 14:13–14). Another point is that “none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper” (14:24), that is, the Jewish authorities who believe that they

will join in the messianic banquet will not be allowed (see the Note on 14:15). According to Matthew, Jesus' point is that "many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14; see the Analysis on 14:15–24). In this light, it is a natural step to conclude that Luke "draws from his independent source."⁹²

In some instances, the teachings of Jesus mirror one another as we move from Matthew to Luke, except the setting, opening again the possibility that Jesus repeats basically the same words on different occasions. As an example, both Gospel writers preserve Jesus' astute statement on the impossibility of serving two masters (see 16:13; Matt. 6:24). In Matthew, it appears in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and largely stands apart from the sayings that Jesus brings up before and after it. In Luke, Jesus repeats his declaration at the end of his Parable of the Unjust Steward where it applies to the steward's situation of divided loyalties and to the challenges that his disciples will face when making choices in the world (see 16:14–18; the Analysis on 16:13–18).

A second example consists of Jesus' Parable of the Lost Sheep (see 15:1–7; Matt. 18:12–14). In Matthew, the parable sits amidst a series of teachings against offending children. In fact, at the end of the parable, he quotes Jesus as concluding, "it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Matt. 18:14). According to Luke, Jesus rehearses the parable when pressed by "the Pharisees and scribes" about his association with "sinners" (15:1–2; see the Notes and Analysis thereon). Matthew quotes Jesus as saying, "if so be that he [the owner] find it [the sheep]" (Matt. 18:13), whereas Jesus says in Luke's version that the owner searches "until he find it" (15:4). Matthew records that, after the owner of the sheep finds the lost one, "he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine" (Matt. 14:13). In contrast, Luke reports that the owner invites "friends and neighbours" to a joyous celebration over the sheep's recovery and that "in heaven" joy will erupt "over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons" (15:6–7). Thus, Jesus' parable in Luke focuses on the recovery of lost souls, rather than on children. Not surprisingly, this theme continues through the following parables of the Lost Coin (see 15:8–10) and the Prodigal Son (see 15:11–32). It therefore seems evident that Jesus repeats the two stories on different

92. *TDNT*, 4:187.

occasions to different audiences in order to make a different point (see the Analysis on 15:3–7).⁹³

I. Independence from Other Gospels

From our review in the last two sections above, it becomes clear that connections exist between Luke’s Gospel and those of Mark and Matthew. Certainly Mark, and possibly Matthew, are among the “many” accounts that preserve Jesus’ life and ministry which Luke knows about and draws from (1:1). But each story, each event must be examined to determine whether we can conclude that Luke adopts it or whether he learns it from another source. It is customary among commentators to lump all of Luke’s unique stories into a single source called “L,” indicating Luke’s special information. But because we do not know whether some items come from a written document or whether he learns others from oral interviews, we cannot hold that “L” is a single, unified source.⁹⁴ We just know that, by his diligent efforts, he brings together as much as he is able into a unified “declaration” or narrative (1:1; Greek *diēgēsis*; see the Analysis on 1:1–4).⁹⁵ Let us examine a few passages that point to compelling evidence for Luke’s independence from Mark and Matthew.

Perhaps oddly, Luke seems to share intriguing connections with the Gospel of John, mostly manifested in seemingly small details. The ties are close enough that one scholar judges that “Luke and John were relying on two allied streams of oral tradition.”⁹⁶ Possibly, possibly not. But a taste of common elements will bear out some sort of link. For instance, both list a second man named Judas among the Twelve (see 6:16; John 14:22); both hold that Satan enters Judas and inspires the betrayal (see 22:3 and the Note thereon; John 13:27); both write that the high priest’s servant loses his right ear in the scuffle at the arrest (see 22:50; John 18:10); both record that Pilate declares Jesus to be innocent no fewer than three times (see 23:4, 14, 22; John 18:38; 19:4, 6); and both note that two angels appear to announce Jesus’ resurrection (see 24:4; John 20:12).⁹⁷ None of these details appear in Matthew and Mark.

93. Beare, *Earliest Records of Jesus*, 178; Marshall, *Luke*, 600; Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965–73), 1:508 (hereafter cited as *DNTC*).

94. Caird, *Luke*, 19–20; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:65–66, 82–85.

95. Liddell and Scott, *Lexicon*, 427; BAGD, 194.

96. Caird, *Luke*, 21.

97. Caird, *Luke*, 20.

One of the most memorable of Jesus' sayings deals with "faith as a grain of mustard seed" (17:6; see also Matt. 17:20). The saying catches our attention both because of the tiny size of this seed—it is among the smallest of seeds—and because of the principle that faith usually starts from small beginnings (see the Note on 17:6).⁹⁸ But we notice first that Matthew and Luke feature the saying in different places in Jesus' story. According to Matthew, Jesus teaches the principle of faith after some of his disciples botch the healing of a young boy while Jesus is on the Mount of Transfiguration (see Matt. 17:14–16). For Luke, Jesus utters the saying after "the apostles" beg of him, "Increase our faith" (17:5). According to Matthew, Jesus stresses the enormous power of faith by promising, "ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matt. 17:20; also Matt. 21:21; Mark 11:22–23; see the Note on 3:5). In Luke, the power promised by Jesus bursts forth in the following way: "ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you" (17:6; see the Note thereon). The two images—moving a mountain and moving a tree by exercising faith—are not the same, leading Claus-Hunno Hunzinger to judge that Luke's version is the original saying of Jesus.⁹⁹ But as we see in prior examples, our brief review leads us back to an earlier conclusion: that Luke preserves one version of Jesus' saying that he utters on two occasions to different audiences to make separate points (see the Analysis on 17:5–10).

Luke's account of Jesus' experience in Gethsemane differs notably from the reports of Matthew and Mark. Luke does not repeat the name Gethsemane, as Matthew and Mark do (see Matt. 26:36; Mark 14:32), but he calls it "the place," signaling it as not only the spot for Jesus' suffering but also its special, sacred character (see the Note on 22:40). Luke seems to know of only one visit by Jesus to his three chief Apostles during his night of anguish (see the Notes on 22:45–46) rather than the three narrated in the other Gospels (see Matt. 26:40, 43, 45; Mark 14:37, 40, 41). Further, in a disputed passage, Luke reports the visit of an angel, "strengthening [Jesus]" (see the Note on 22:43). The other accounts preserve no such narrative. Moreover, only Luke writes of Jesus sweating "great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (22:44). None of the other Gospels preserve this most important scene although other scripture does (see Mosiah 3:7;

98. *TDNT*, 7:290–91.

99. *TDNT*, 7:289.

D&C 19:17–18) as do the early Christian authors Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Tatian (see the Note on 22:44). These major differences between Luke and the other Gospel writers nod toward Luke being independent from the others as he carefully reconstructs the scene in Gethsemane (see the Analysis on 22:39–46).

We turn to a final illustration. Luke alone records words of Jesus as he walks to his crucifixion. Only Luke shows us that the mortal Savior does not stop his efforts to reach out to people after his trial before Pilate. Instead, Jesus desperately tries to warn them of the calamities that will descend on Jerusalem. Twisting in discomfort toward the “great company of people, and of women” who are following him, he shouts out particularly to the women, “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.” Why? Because “the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare.” The situation in the city will become so awful that inhabitants will “begin to say to the [surrounding] mountains, Fall on us; and to the [nearby] hills, Cover us” (23:27–30). As gloomy additions of the Joseph Smith Translation to the Gospels of Matthew and Mark affirm, “great tribulations [shall descend] . . . upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; such as was not before sent upon Israel, of God, since the beginning of their kingdom” (JST Matt. 24:18; JST Mark 13:20). Thus Jesus, in an overflowing compassion that ignores his own pains, extends himself again in warning to those whose children will suffer. All this comes to us from Luke (see the Analysis on 23:27–33).

J. The New Rendition

This book cites the King James Version because of its standing as the pre-eminent English text. Alongside it in this book is a new rendition by Eric D. Huntsman. My thanks go to Eric for allowing me to include it in this volume. Huntsman’s version carries a more literal and modern sense of the Greek text. The elegance of the latter translation does not rise to the level of the KJV—no English translation does¹⁰⁰—but it serves as a guide to readers when passages seem difficult to grasp. More than that, taking the two translations together allows us to gain a fuller sense of what Luke intends his audience to understand. The New Rendition grows mainly out of the Nestle-Aland critical edition of the Greek text in *Novum Testamentum*

100. Adam Nicolson, *God’s Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003).

Graece, including down to and especially the most recent edition, the twenty-eighth (2012).¹⁰¹

One passage especially in Luke's Gospel has come under scrutiny because this passage is found chiefly in later copies of the text of Luke and is missing from the earliest manuscript (P⁷⁵) and other important manuscripts. Of Jesus' suffering in Gethsemane, the KJV reads, "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (22:43–44). Even though the Nestle-Aland text and a majority of modern translations indicate that this passage is likely inserted later into Luke's account, other scholars accept its originality because it is unlikely to have been invented.¹⁰² As noted earlier, one reason for taking it seriously is because early Christian authors Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and likely Tatian, all from the second century, know of this passage that attests Jesus bleeding while in Gethsemane. A second reason for being open to its originality rests on modern scripture. One passage prophesies about Jesus' bleeding: "for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people" (Mosiah 3:7). In a second, the Risen Savior himself refers back to this moment: "[this] suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit" (D&C 19:18). Hence, for Latter-day Saints the observation that Jesus suffers terribly in Gethsemane and bleeds from his pores is secure (see JST 22:43–44; the Notes on 22:43–44).

IV. DISTINCTIVE TEACHINGS

A. Property and Money

Few topics blossom as fully in Luke's Gospel as do property and money. It appears that, by preserving a multitude of Jesus' teachings on property and money, Luke is sharing with us his own fresh set of priorities, priorities shaped after his conversion to his new faith. As his two books—Luke and Acts—demonstrate, he is an educated man. To acquire that education, and

101. *Novum Testamentum Graece*, ed. Barbara Aland and others, 28th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012).

102. Plummer, *Luke*, 509; Marshall, *Luke*, 831–32.

then to devote it to researching and writing as he does, requires leisure and money. We can readily judge that, early in his life, these things are important to him, perhaps of supreme importance. But after he becomes converted to the Risen Christ, the priorities in this life change. His selection of stories and sayings apparently mirrors that change. From many examples,¹⁰³ we can examine only a few.

We readily behold that property is a major issue because its lack—poverty—stands so stark and prominent at the beginning and ending of Jesus’ life. The stories about his mother’s poor offering after his birth (see 2:24) and the poor widow’s offering in the temple (see 21:1–4) form an *inclusio* that bridges from the first to the last of Luke’s record, underlying its unity. By including these accounts, Luke adroitly angles our minds toward the issues of poverty and wealth (see the Analysis on 2:21–24; 21:1–4).

In Jesus’ first teaching on poverty and wealth, framed in his Sermon on the Plain, he intones, “Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled” (6:20–21; see the Notes thereon). Following these sweeping promises, he then issues warnings: “woe unto you that are rich! . . . Woe unto you that are full!” Why such warnings? Because “ye [wealthy people] have received your consolation” (6:24–25). We sense immediately that such people receive all that they will enjoy in this life with nothing to enjoy in the next life, unless they turn to the Savior and undergo a change of heart about their wealth, as we shall soon see (see the Notes on 6:24; 18:27).¹⁰⁴

A number of Jesus’ parables concern money and property. One of the most prominent and longest is the parable of the Prodigal Son (see 15:11–32). This parable brims with property matters, including the division of the father’s estate, the depletion of younger son’s portion through “riotous living,” the hiring of this son by “a citizen of that country . . . to feed swine,” the older son’s rightful claim to “serve” his father faithfully as he honorably prepares himself to inherit the estate, and the father’s assurance to his older

103. For example, poor vs. rich (see 6:20–26); seeds choked by riches (8:14); divider of property (see 12:13–21); one’s treasure (12:31–34); supper for the poor (see 14:12–24); parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin (see 15:3–10); parable of the prodigal son (see 15:11–32); parables of the unjust steward and Lazarus and the rich man (see 16:1–12, 19–31); parable of the widow and unjust judge (see 18:2–5); story of the rich ruler and its aftermath (see 18:18–30); parable of the pounds (see 19:11–27); parable of the vineyard (see 20:9–16); issue of tribute to Caesar (see 20:21–26); dispossessed widows (see 20:47); gift of poor widow (see 21:1–4); statement on personal cares (see 21:34–36).

104. *TDNT*, 5:798; Marshall, *Luke*, 256.

son, “all that I have is thine” (see 15:12–13, 15, 29, 31; the Notes on 15:12, 31). Although the main thrust of the parable concerns the recovery of the lost, that is, the lost younger son, a secondary push has to do with an inheritance that the younger son can or will no longer possess.

In one of his most direct declarations on money, Jesus talks about taxes (see 20:20–26). In a word, we owe them to the state. During the last week of his life, some of those assigned to watch him, so “that they might take hold of his words [and] . . . might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor,” approach him with a burning question: “Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?” (20:20–22). The question grows out of a growing resistance movement whose members come to call themselves “Zealots” and choose to stand against the Roman government, which includes not paying taxes. Eventually, those who hold this view, because of their militaristic rebellion, will help to bring down the might of Rome on their people in the Jewish war of AD 66–70, a conflict that Jesus predicts and brings on his people unparalleled death and destruction (see the Note on 20:25; the Analysis on 20:20–26).

Perhaps the most notable event in Jesus’ ministry where he deals with wealth concerns his meeting with the rich ruler and, especially, his following comments (see 18:18–30). Both Matthew, who alone calls this man “young,” and Mark preserve this account (see Matt. 19:16–30; Mark 10:17–31). Jesus’ words to the fellow, of course, drive home a startling point about the man’s wealth and its massive weight against him inheriting “eternal life” (18:18): “sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.” Stunned, the ruler becomes “very sorrowful” and turns away because “he was very rich” (18:22–24). Hence, the man’s wealth squarely blocks his path to eternal life. Jesus illustrates in dramatic fashion the impossibility of this fellow’s situation: “it is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God” (18:25; see the Note thereon). Jesus’ followers are just as surprised and, standing bewildered, ask: “Who then can be saved?” Jesus’ response seemingly softens the blow of his earlier words: “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (18:26–27).

But what exactly does Jesus mean? The Prophet Joseph Smith senses the ambiguity and adds words of Jesus unrecorded by Luke, and lacking in Mark and Matthew as well. These words uncover the meaning of Jesus’ declaration. The first part fits with what Jesus says elsewhere, but the second part changes the landscape for the wealthy: “It is impossible for them

who trust in riches, to enter into the kingdom of God; *but he who forsaketh the things which are of this world, it is possible with God, that he should enter in*" (JST 18:27; emphasis added; see also JST Matt. 19:26; JST Mark 10:26). This single statement flings the door wide open to the wealthy to "inherit eternal life" (18:18; see the Notes on 18:24–25, 27; the Analysis on 16:1–12; 18:26–30).

B. The Church

The question whether the Savior organizes a church during his mortal ministry must first deal with his attitude toward the institutions of worship in his day, the synagogue and temple. His attitude is glowingly positive. To be sure, people tied closely to synagogue and temple launch themselves against him, trying to discredit him and, ultimately, to kill him (see 13:14; 19:47; 20:1; 22:2, 52; 23:10, 23). Even so, he respectfully turns these institutions into places of teaching and miracle working. In fact, Luke features the youthful Jesus accompanying his parents to the temple and therefore mirroring their practice (see 2:41–51), and later observes that "his custom was [to go] . . . into the synagogue on the sabbath day" (4:16). Near the end of his life, he calls the temple "My house" and "the house of prayer" (19:46; see the Note thereon). In this light, we conclude that he holds the synagogue and temple in very high regard and models a behavior for his followers to emulate (see 21:37; 24:53; Acts 2:46; 5:12).¹⁰⁵

Perhaps surprisingly, Jesus' own visible valuation of the synagogue begins with the temptations from the devil (see 4:1–13). In short, the temptations bore into the question about power and authority: Who possesses the real power and authority? The devil? Jesus? It seems odd that, on the spot, Jesus does not respond with force to the devil's challenges. "If thou be the Son of God" (4:3, 9); "If thou . . . wilt worship me" (4:7). Instead, he quietly quotes scripture and leaves the questions unanswered. "It is written" (4:4, 8); "It is said" (4:12). But does he softly sidestep them? No. After the temptations, Luke follows Jesus back to Galilee and ultimately to Nazareth, his hometown, where we find him in "the synagogue on the sabbath day" (4:16). Friends and family members and acquaintances, hearing of his earlier activities in Capernaum (see 4:23), wait with bated breath as he stands to read from scripture: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," he recites, "because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he

105. Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles*, 101.

hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted” (4:18). In these words stands the declaration of his authority—in the heart of a synagogue service (see the Note on 4:18; the Analysis on 4:16–30). But there is more.

The next Sabbath we find Jesus down in Capernaum, more than twenty miles away, inside the synagogue of course (see 4:31, 33). Remarkably, inside the building, “there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil” (4:33; see the Note thereon). To bring relief to the man, Jesus rebukes the unclean demon, driving him out of the man (see 4:34–35). We can predict the reaction of the congregation members: “they were all amazed.” Then Luke quotes the response of some in attendance: “*with authority and power* he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out” (4:36; emphasis added). Here, on the lips of attendees is the affirmation of Jesus’ authority and power after they witness a manifestation of his authority and power inside the synagogue. We emphasize, as Luke does, that both Jesus’ miracle and the congregation’s immediate response take place in a synagogue service, on the Sabbath day. What can we therefore conclude? It becomes clear that Jesus not only reverences the synagogue and the Sabbath day but also consciously chooses the synagogue in Nazareth to announce his authority and the synagogue in Capernaum to show his power. The synagogue—a place of worship, of prayer, of scripture reading, of devotion, of holy ordinances, of sacred learning—is the place where Jesus responds to the devil’s challenge about power and authority (see the Note on 4:36). Because within days he will call the first four men who will serve as Apostles (see 5:1–11), it is evident that the synagogue, an institution of worship, forms the launchpad for his own church organization (see the Analysis on 4:1–13).

Within Luke’s Gospel we begin to see much of the outline of his church organization. Naturally, Jesus first calls the Twelve. And he guides the process. He first calls key men to follow him, initially the two pairs of fishermen brothers, Peter and Andrew, James and John, and then Levi, the customs agent (see 5:1–11, 27–28; the Notes on 5:6–7). After reaching out to these brethren, he allows the natural process of personal attraction to him and his message to swell the ranks of followers so that, a few weeks later, he can go “into a mountain to pray” about choosing “twelve” men from their number “whom also he named apostles” (6:12–13). That same morning, after calling these twelve men, he leads them down to “the plain” where they meet the larger number “of his disciples” as well as “a great multitude of people,” some of whom come from far away “to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases” (6:17). The scene becomes the formal

announcement of the Twelve, the anchors of the church's organization (see the Notes on 6:17; 9:1–2; the Analysis on 5:1–11; 6:17–19; 9:1–6).¹⁰⁶ But Jesus does not stop here. He regularly offers instruction to disciples, more specifically to the Twelve, throughout his ministry (see 12:36–38; 16:8; 22:25–27; the Notes on 8:51, 54; 9:50, 60; 10:2; 12:39, 41–43, 48; the Analysis on 9:49–50; 12:41–48).

We turn next to women. Conceptually, Jesus features them as full members of his kingdom in a simple pair of parables. In the first, he compares the kingdom to “a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden,” underscoring work typically done by a man. He then compares the kingdom to “leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal,” highlighting an act usually performed by a woman (13:18–21). In these two brief illustrations, Jesus turns his social and legal world upside-down. For in the Ancient Near East, in any period, women stand as second-class citizens. No so for Jesus' kingdom. They will enjoy full membership on an equal plane with men (see the Note on 13:21; the Analysis on 13:18–21).

On a practical level, following Luke's first notice of “the twelve” accompanying Jesus on a preaching tour, he writes about “certain women” from Galilee who receive ministrations from Jesus and also minister “unto him of their substance” (8:1–3). Such a place of honor, next to the Twelve, signals their high importance among Jesus' closest followers. They will reappear at the cross and at the tomb, following him to Jerusalem and thereby becoming first-rank witnesses of his resurrection (see 23:49, 55–56; 24:1–11, 22–24).¹⁰⁷ In addition, though not noted, they most certainly assist in the preparations for and the serving of the Last Supper (see the Note on 22:8). Their involvement in these significant events, and their close tie to the Twelve, underscore their roles as primary participants in Jesus' emerging church (see Acts 1:14).¹⁰⁸ From what we can learn about them, they appear

106. S. Kent Brown, “The Twelve,” in *The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ: From the Transfiguration through the Triumphal Entry*, ed. Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Thomas A. Wayment (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006), 98–124.

107. Plummer, *Luke*, 214–15; Caird, *Luke*, 116; Green, *Luke*, 850–60; Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 48–51.

108. Craig A. Evans, *Luke*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1990), 122–23; Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, vol. 24 of *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 241; Robert C. Tannehill, *Luke*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 138–39; Green, *Luke*, 317–20.

very much like an ancient Relief Society (see the Notes on 8:1–3; 23:56; the Analysis on 22:7–13; 23:50–56).

Another highly visible group consists of the Seventy (see 10:1–12, 17–20). Jesus calls these men from the growing entourage of followers and sends them on a preaching mission. To them he gives instructions similar to the Twelve (see 9:1–6); to them he gives priesthood power to “heal the sick” (10:9); for them he suspends food laws, indicating that their mission will reach out to Gentiles (see the Notes on 10:7–8). Thus Jesus creates a second quorum of leaders in his church, this one with a charge to reach beyond fellow Jews to embrace Gentiles (see the Notes on 8:38–39; 10:1; the Analysis on 8:26–40; 10:1–12).¹⁰⁹ Modern scripture affirms this very assessment: “The Seventy are also called to preach the gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world—thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling” (D&C 107:25).

Little noticed are individuals who function essentially as heralds for Jesus, much as John does, although John prepares for Jesus generally and these people form an advance team that travels to specific destinations.¹¹⁰ As we have already seen, when Jesus turns deliberately toward Jerusalem and away from Galilee, he “sent messengers before his face.” Their task is not to preach but “to make ready for him” (9:52). They are to announce Jesus’ coming in towns and villages before he arrives, thus assuring that citizens have opportunity to see and hear the Son of God and alerting townspeople that a large group will be arriving so that they have goods at hand to supply them with food and places to lodge. These messengers are an obvious key to the success of Jesus’ preaching mission. In the modern church, such people are Aaronic Priesthood holders, who are to assist church leaders “to make appointments, and to prepare the way . . . this is the way that mine apostles, in ancient days, built up my church” (D&C 84:107–8), duplicating the pattern established here by Jesus (see the Notes on 9:49–50, 52; the Analysis on 9:49–50).

In light of what we introduce above, we conclude that long before Jesus arrives in Jerusalem for the last time, he organizes his church and establishes important patterns of missionary work and church service. He authorizes men and women and perhaps even youths. His intent is to spread his message to as many people as possible and to give them opportunity to accept that message.

109. Plummer, *Luke*, 269–71; Brown, “Seventy in Scripture,” 25–45.

110. Plummer, *Luke*, 262.

C. Keys

Only Matthew documents a known statement from the mortal Jesus about keys: “I will give unto thee [Peter] the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” he intones, “and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 16:19). Plainly, these keys open the powers of sealing and unsealing earthly matters, rendering them effective or ineffective in the next life. In Luke, keys lie just out of sight, but are present nonetheless. He quotes Jesus’ summarizing of a famine condition in the days of Elijah: “many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months” (4:25). Clearly implicit are keys that lock and unlock the heavens, blocking or allowing passage of blessings from one sphere to another (see Rev. 11:6).¹¹¹

Near the end of his Gospel, Luke writes of the experience of the two disciples who walk with and then refresh themselves with the Resurrected Christ in Emmaus. At a certain moment, “their eyes were opened, and they knew [Jesus]” (24:31). For a second time, keys are assumed, this time to open the eyes. In the very next verse, the two disciples say “one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, . . . while he opened to us the scriptures?” (24:32). As is now obvious, keys are required to open our understanding of the scriptures. In fact, this same use of keys plays out later that evening in the presence of a number of disciples: “Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures” (24:45). These keys, designed to lock and unlock the heavens and to lock and unlock people’s eyes and the scriptures, differ in function from those promised to Peter. But they are just as real and point to the variety of keys that the Savior turns in our behalf (see 11:52; 13:25; Rev. 1:18; 3:7; 9:1; 11:6; 20:1; the Notes on 24:31–32, 45).¹¹²

Luke’s narrative thus presents a series of passages that have to do with keys, specifically from the mortal viewpoint, that is, how they affect us, whether opening our eyes or opening our ability to comprehend. Modern scripture offers a similar picture, but from the divine perspective: “the light [of Christ] which shineth, which giveth you light . . . is the same light that quickeneth your understandings” (D&C 88:11; see the Notes on 24:31–32).

111. *TDNT*, 3:745.

112. *TDNT*, 3:744–48.

The Savior possesses the keys to open the door to proper understanding, namely, to understand as God does.¹¹³

D. Delay of Second Coming

Almost all commentators agree that statements about the delay of the Savior's Second Coming arise from early Christians themselves who, expecting him to return immediately, have to deal with his nonappearance. But indicators exist that Jesus is the author of this delay, an observation that rests firmly in other scripture. The earliest signal appears in a vision of Enoch wherein, after seeing the resurrection, the seer asks the Lord, "Wilt thou not come again upon the earth?" What is the response? "As I live," declares the Lord in an oath, "even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance" (Moses 7:59–60). Thus, long before Jesus comes upon the earth as an infant, he promises that he will return again, but only "in the last days." In this connection, those who are converted in the age of the Apostles come to Christ because he will "manifest [himself] unto them . . . by the Holy Ghost," not by personal appearance (3 Ne. 15:23). The Apostle Paul spells out the delay in different terms. To the Thessalonian saints he pleads that they not be "shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as [if] from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." That day will only arrive after "there come a falling away first," that is, an apostasy (2 Thes. 2:2–3).

In Luke's record, we encounter Jesus' first attempt to give contour to this teaching when, at a distance from Jerusalem, he laments, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, . . . and ye would not! . . . Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (13:34–35). The Joseph Smith Translation adds a strip of authenticity to this lament by noting Jesus' action in an insertion before this saying: "in this very hour he began to weep over Jerusalem." The JST then buttresses the saying by adjusting and adding words of Jesus in its midst: "verily I say unto, Ye shall not *know* me, *until ye have received from the hand of the Lord a just recompense for all your sins*" (JST 13:34, 36; emphasis added; see the Notes on 13:34–35; the Analysis on

113. *TDNT*, 3:744–53; Andrew C. Skinner, "Two Crucified Men: Insights into the Death of Jesus of Nazareth," in *Bountiful Harvest: Essays in Honor of S. Kent Brown*, ed. Andrew C. Skinner, D. Morgan Davis, and Carl Griffin (Provo, Utah: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2011), 384–85.

13:31–35). The sense is that, after the inhabitants suffer, the Savior mercifully will allow them to come to know him as he is (see Isa. 40:1–2).

No more than a few weeks later, Jesus gives voice again to his Second Coming. On this occasion, he addresses specifically his disciples: “The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.” Why not? Because the Son of Man’s coming will be later. He follows these words almost immediately with a further hint at delay: “as the lightning, . . . so shall also the Son of man be in his day,” coming suddenly and brilliantly (17:22, 24). The Joseph Smith Translation adds weight to the distant approach of the Second Coming by changing this last verse to read: “as the *light of the morning*, . . . so shall also the Son of man be in his day” (JST 17:24; emphasis added). The brilliance remains, but the suddenness diminishes (see the Notes on 17:22–24; the Analysis on 17:20–37). In sum, it is just as reasonable to see Jesus offering such teaching to his disciples as they approach the capital city as it is to try to make this instruction a part of the drama-filled days in Jerusalem.¹¹⁴ In light of the JST additions and adjustments, it is clear that Jesus announces the delay, not others.

As evidence that Jesus and his followers discuss his Second Coming before arriving in the city we cite his words repeated to them as they gather together atop the Mount of Olives for his important sermon there: “As ye have asked of me concerning the signs of my [second] coming, in the day when I shall come in my glory in the clouds of heaven” (D&C 45:16). Here is the tipoff, in Jesus’ own words, that on earlier occasions he and they converse about his Second Coming. But what about the delay? Jesus goes on: “concerning Jerusalem . . . when that day shall come, shall a remnant [of Jerusalem’s residents] be scattered among all nations; But they shall be gathered again; but they shall remain until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (D&C 45:24–25). Clearly, Jesus envisions a long delay that involves a scattering and gathering of his people as well as blessings coming to the Gentiles. Concerning that era of the Gentiles, “he answered them, and said, In the generation in which the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, there shall be signs” (JST 21:25). Notably, the signs that Jesus discloses in his sermon on the Mount of Olives will appear chiefly in that distant age (see the Notes on 21:25–28; the Analysis on 21:25–28).

With the help of modern scripture, therefore, we arrive at a clear understanding that Jesus himself teaches about a delay of his Second Coming. To

114. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1166, 1168.

be sure, some early Christians mistakenly believe that his reappearance is near. But that expectation of an immediate return is incorrect, as Paul reminds church members living in Thessalonica (see 2 Thes. 2:2–3).

E. Satan

Satan is a real personality, not a figment of people's imagination. And, as Luke shows in his narrative, Satan possesses genuine powers, including his own kingdom (see the Note on 11:18). For example, he has the ability to diminish, even take, divine light that a person receives through God's word; he can degrade a person's well-being as he does to the woman afflicted for eighteen years; he possesses power to break a person's commitment to the Savior as he seeks to do with Peter; more frightening still, he can directly influence a person to do his will, if the person becomes a willing host, as Judas does. Notably, modern scripture affirms this brief photograph of the devil (see the Notes on 8:12; 13:16; 22:3, 31; the Analysis on 8:26–40; also Alma 5:41; 34:35; 40:13; 3 Ne. 18:18; D&C 10:10, 15, 20–21; 29:40; 78:10). But there is more.

Satan's minions come in multiples and can behave in the same way that he does. After all, he captures a third of the spirits in the premortal struggle for dominance and they are now under his influence (see Moses 4:6; D&C 29:36–37; Rev. 12:4). For instance, seven come to inhabit Mary Magdalene and, in a merciful moment, are cast out; a large number, that call themselves "Legion," take possession of the gentile man on the east side of the Sea of Galilee and, as in Mary's situation, are driven out by Jesus' power (see the Notes on 8:2, 27, 29–33). Hence, the devil possesses an army of willing demons that do his bidding (see the Notes on 11:17–18).

But Satan and his demon forces are subject to the Savior's power. Again and again in Gospel stories, Jesus forces them from their temporary roosts in accord with a prophecy uttered more than a century before his birth: "[the Savior] shall cast out devils [in his mortal ministry], or the evil spirits which dwell in the hearts of the children of men" (Mosiah 3:6). Jesus first signals that he can both resist Satan's temptations and also overcome them when the two of them tussle in the desert (see 4:1–13). Within days, Jesus follows his victory in the wilderness by summarily tossing out one of Satan's minions from a beleaguered man in the Capernaum synagogue (see 4:33–35). Plainly, Jesus is taking back territory over which Satan exerts power (see the Analysis on 10:17–20). Further, as we have noticed, Jesus asserts his own power over the devil when he portrays "a strong man" in "his palace" whose "goods are in peace" until assailed by "a stronger than

he” who overcomes “him, [and] . . . taketh away from him all his armour wherein he trusted” (11:21–22). This scene pictures Satan, the “strong man,” resting at ease in someone’s home, now designated “his palace,” until “a stronger than he,” the Savior, comes along and pushes him out of that home. The contest is over control of the home wherein Jesus challenges Satan’s grip. It is significant that Jesus invokes images of the home to affirm his power over the devil and his minions (see the Notes on 11:21–22; the Analysis on 11:14–28).

V. CHARACTER OF LUKE’S GOSPEL

A. Date and Place of Composition

The question of dating Luke’s Gospel always ties to the Jewish revolt of AD 66–70. Do hints exist that he is writing after the war? Yes and no. On the *yes* side, stand passages that stress the law-abiding character of Christians, often in contrast to their Jewish neighbors (see 1:6; 2:4–5, 22, 24, 27, 39, 42, 51; 20:46–47; etc.; Acts 13:50; 14:2, 19; 17:5, 13; etc.). This dimension is evidently a natural outcome of the war wherein most inhabitants of the Roman world do not know how to distinguish Christians and Jews and may well assume that all Christians are sympathizers and fellow citizens with the Jewish rebels. Luke apparently senses the need to make a distinction for his reading public (see the Analysis on 2:21–24). Luke constructs the second stool of the *yes* response when he writes that, before him, “many have taken in hand to set forth . . . a declaration” of Jesus’ story (1:1). If Mark’s Gospel is among those many, and it likely is, then Luke writes his Gospel following the war, judging that Mark composes his Gospel in the late sixties of the first century (see section III.G above).¹¹⁵ The third part of the *yes* answer arises from Jesus’ predictions of the terrible fate of the city during the war, predictions seemingly too detailed to look forward to Jerusalem’s fall but, rather, grow out of hindsight (see 13:35; 19:41–44; 21:6, 20–24; 23:28–31).¹¹⁶ But this latter point rests squarely on the view that no one can predict exact details in the future, a notion that modern studies and modern scripture undercut (see D&C 45:18–25).¹¹⁷ To be sure,

115. Brown, “Testimony of Mark,” 61–87.

116. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:54.

117. Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles*, 13.

Luke likely composes his Gospel after the fall of the city, but he is a faithful reporter of the Savior's predictions (see the Analysis on 19:41–44; 21:5–6, 20–24).

On the *no* side, we find no clear cases of Luke's account looking back to the fall of Jerusalem. First, the usual attempt to seize on Jesus' language of 21:20 ("ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies") falls flat because we know that Jesus can predict the future, even with high precision. Second, this event becomes a major moment in the ancient world and we find no allusions to the city's collapse in Luke's book of Acts where he might foreshadow the punishment of Jewish officials and individuals through the city's destruction, punishment for unleashing persecution against the Savior's followers (see Acts 4:1–3; 5:17–18, 26–28; 6:9–13; 7:54–59; 8:1–3; etc.). Third, Luke shows no knowledge of the Apostle Paul's fate in his book of Acts, how his hearing before the emperor goes (see Acts 25:9–12; 28:16), whether Paul travels to Spain as he plans (see Rom. 15:24, 28), or whether he is executed following Nero's burning of Rome in AD 64, as Clement of Rome hints who writes about AD 96 (see 1 Clement 5:3–7).¹¹⁸

In this light, it is impossible to fix a date, even an approximate date, for Luke writing his two-volume work, the Gospel and the book of Acts. On balance, it seems that a date between AD 70 and 80 settles most easily within the evidence, all of which is circumstantial.

The place where Luke composes his Gospel remains unknown. Early and modern attempts locate Luke's efforts in Rome, Achaia, Boeotia, Antioch, or Caesarea; all rely on little or no evidence.¹¹⁹ Most authors will agree that Luke writes his Gospel outside of ancient Palestine. But in light of his grasp of geography, even this judgment is subject to question (see section V.C below).

B. Luke the Man

Luke, "a messenger of Jesus Christ" (JST 1:1), is obviously an educated man skilled in composing in his native language, Greek. Both of his books exhibit a finely attuned ability to communicate well, and they form a genuine history.¹²⁰ Further, he stands as a second or third generation believer.

118. Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles*, 12; Frederick Fyvie Bruce, *Paul: The Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1977), 441–455; Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 359–63, 368–71.

119. Plummer, *Luke*, xxxiii; Marshall, *Luke*, 35; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:57.

120. *TDNT*, 3:395–96.

How so? Because he writes of others, not himself, as “eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word” (1:2). Plainly, he looks backward in time to the life and ministry of his Lord. Early Christian tradition puts his residence in Antioch, far to the north of ancient Palestine, in the rather late, so-called “Anti-Marcionite Prologue” to Luke’s Gospel. But this information is open to question.¹²¹ This said, can we know anything more about him?

The Apostle Paul offers a substantial hint in his epistle to the Colossians about who Luke is: “Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you” (Col. 4:14; see also 2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 1:24). From every appearance, including especially the “we” passages in Acts, Luke accompanies Paul for extended periods of time (see Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–21:18; 27:1–28:16). Hence, it is natural to see him with Paul when he writes the Colossians letter while a captive in Rome¹²² or, possibly, in Ephesus¹²³ (see Col. 4:3, 10, 18; also 1:24). Indeed, we know that Luke spends time with Paul while he is a prisoner in Rome (see Acts 28:16); and he may well enjoy a previous acquaintance with “the elders of the church” in Ephesus who come to Miletus at Paul’s request (Acts 20:16–18). Hence, Paul possesses opportunity to mention Luke as if he is known to church members in Colossae.

But do these observations hold up to scrutiny? The primary protest against Luke’s companionship with Paul arises from the observation that the theology of Paul’s speeches recorded in Acts do not accord with the theological viewpoints in his epistles. But the evidence is mixed. First of all, Luke does not set out to chronicle Paul’s correspondence, or to summarize it. Second, Paul’s impromptu speeches will surely differ from his carefully thought-out letters. Third, the corpus of Paul’s letters will not be gathered until about AD 90, perhaps a decade or more after Luke pens his Gospel and book of Acts. Such a collection, of course, will influence how anyone writes about Paul’s activities. But Luke does not fall under such an influence.¹²⁴

The more focused question has to do with whether Luke’s Gospel shows evidence of a physician’s touch. At the outset, we take notice of H. J. Cadbury’s study which demonstrates that apparent instances of

121. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:45; Lee Martin McDonald, “Anti-Marcionite (Gospel) Prologues,” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman and others, 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1:262–63 (hereafter cited as *ABD*).

122. Bruce, *Paul*, 391–92, 408.

123. Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul*, 178.

124. Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles*, 11, 12–13; Morris, *Luke*, 20–24.

medical vocabulary in the Gospel mirror the language in ancient, non-medical works.¹²⁵ Hence, vocabulary by itself, such as the term for leprosy (Greek *lepra*), does not show Luke to be a physician (see 5:12–13; the Notes thereon). When it comes to possible interest in medical matters, some passages show Luke's elevated concern and other passages do not. We offer four examples of each.

Standing as evidence for Luke's physician background are the following. First, when Jesus heals Simon Peter's mother-in-law of a fever, Luke characterizes the illness as "a great fever" (4:38), a detail that a physician will notice but is missing from Mark's story (see the Notes on 4:35, 38; Mark 1:30–31). Second, in narrating Jesus' restoration of the withered hand of the man in a synagogue, Luke writes that it is his "right hand [that] was withered" (6:6), an observation that a physician will mark, whereas Mark preserves no such remark (see Mark 3:1). Third, Luke notes that the "right ear" of the high priest's servant is cut off at the time of Jesus' arrest (see 22:50; also John 18:10) whereas Mark writes no such detail (see Mark 14:47). Fourth, Luke alone notes that, on the spot, Jesus' heals the ear of this servant (see 22:51; the Notes on 22:50–51). In sum, Luke plainly makes observations that we expect a physician to make.¹²⁶ But is this the whole story?

On the side that Luke is not a physician, we note the following instances. First, when writing about Jesus healing Peter's mother-in-law, Luke omits Mark's expression about Jesus taking her by "the hand," a seemingly odd omission for a physician (4:39; see the Note thereon; Mark 1:31). Second, in contrast to Mark's detail that the woman with "an issue of blood" "felt in her body that she was healed of that plague," Luke leaves out her sense that her whole body is healed after touching Jesus' garment (see 8:44–45; Mark 5:25, 29). Third, according to Luke, Jesus asks a father to lead his afflicted boy to him for a cure (Greek verb *prosagō*), implying his ability to walk (see 9:41), whereas according to Mark the boy is carried (Greek verb *pherō*), a curious adjustment given a physician's interest in the condition of a patient (Mark 9:20).¹²⁷ Fourth, Matthew records that, when Jesus heals the blind men at Jericho (Matthew pictures two blind men), Jesus "had compassion

125. Henry J. Cadbury, *The Style and Literary Method of Luke* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920).

126. *TDNT*, 3:496.

127. *BAGD*, 718, 862–63.

on them, and touched their eyes,” details that a physician will surely pay attention to but do not appear in Luke’s account (see 18:42; Matt. 20:34).

Naturally, the strength of the negative observations depends in large part on the relationship of Luke’s Gospel especially to Mark’s Gospel and, to a lesser degree, to Matthew’s report. As we see in our earlier review, the connections are not necessarily robust (see sections III.G and III.H). Nevertheless, Luke’s interest in medical matters, if he is a physician, does not push itself prominently into view in his Gospel narrative.

C. Geography and Topography

Above, we lay out the case for Luke spending time in Jerusalem when he accompanies the Apostle Paul to the city, remaining at least two weeks and perhaps much longer. Hence, he enjoys an opportunity to see the topography of the area as well as the relationship of parts of the city to their surroundings (see section II.E). That is certainly the case with Bethphage which lies on the route to Jerusalem from Jericho (see 19:28–29). He also knows that a person can enter the temple directly from the east and north without going through the city (see 19:45).¹²⁸

The more pressing and interesting question is whether Luke knows the geography of Galilee in the north.¹²⁹ Even though he evidently spends much or all of two years with Paul in Caesarea, a seaside city (see Acts 27:1–2),¹³⁰ we do not know whether he travels into the area of Jesus’ youth and early ministry. Most scholars simply dismiss Luke’s understanding of Galilean topographical features, claiming that his account of events in the north is vague at best. But is this the whole story? Do we find elements that point to Luke’s firmer grasp of the area? A few examples turn our gaze in a different direction.

First of all, Luke knows of the long descent from Nazareth to Capernaum (see 4:31). From some source, perhaps his own knowledge, he understands that the Sea of Galilee and its shoreline towns lie well below the hilltop village of Nazareth (see the Note on 4:31). In this connection, moreover, Luke knows the direction of the wind that rakes across the lake during a storm—it rushes “down” to the surface from the surrounding heights (8:23). Matthew and Mark preserve no such notation (see Matt. 8:24; Mark

128. Aharoni and others, *Carta Bible Atlas*, map 239.

129. Plummer, *Luke*, 20: “There is no reason for believing that he himself was unfamiliar with [the geography].”

130. Caird, *Luke*, 19, 27, 116.

4:37). So they are not Luke's source (see the Note on 8:23). Furthermore, in the account of Jesus' trip to the east side of the lake where he heals a demoniac, Luke adds the expression "over against Galilee" to clarify the locale of miracle (8:26). Again, neither Matthew nor Mark carry a notation with this kind of specificity (see the Note on 8:26; Matt. 8:28; Mark 5:1). In addition, Luke consciously situates the stories of Jesus' long journey to Jerusalem into a region generally south of Galilee (see 9:51–19:40), rimming them along the imprecise border with Samaria (see 9:52–53; 17:11; see the Notes on 9:52 and 17:11; the Analysis on 9:51–56; 17:11–19).

Above all, indicators of Luke's basic grasp of Galilean topography rise within the setting for Jesus' Sermon on the Plain. Throughout the night before the sermon, Jesus prays on "a mountain." In the morning, from his followers he selects the "twelve" whom he names "apostles," and brings them with him to "the plain" where he will speak to "a great multitude" (6:12–13, 17). For those who hold that Jesus' Sermon on the Plain and Sermon on the Mount are variant versions of the same sermon, the notation about "the plain" creates a problem because no such place exists along the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, the evident place where Jesus delivers his Sermon on the Mount. For here the ground slopes up from the shoreline for a short distance before rising steeply into the surrounding heights. But a completely different topography presents itself on the northwest corner of the lake, a mere three miles from Capernaum (see the Notes on 6:12, 17). There, setting off a rather level place, mountains and cliffs surround an extended plain that reaches inland and westward about a mile from the edge of the lake. This spot matches exactly Luke's topographic description of land forms for Jesus' calling of the Twelve and for his sermon (see the Analysis on 6:20–49). Furthermore, this plain is the natural place for hearers from "Tyre and Sidon" to arrive from the north and west because the road for them comes down through the Arbel Pass onto this level area (see the Note on 6:17).¹³¹ In fact, if Luke indeed visits Nazareth and Capernaum, he travels this same road.

Reasons for seeing Luke unacquainted with Galilean geography include the following. First, he omits Capernaum as the place for Jesus' healing of the paralyzed man who is carried on a stretcher (5:17; see Mark 2:1; also

131. Barry J. Beitzel, "Roads and Highways (Pre-Roman)," in *ABD*, 5:779; Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, Eric D. Huntsman, and Thomas A. Wayment, *Jesus Christ and the World of the New Testament: An Illustrated Reference for Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006), 150–51.

Matt. 9:1). If Luke knows Mark's account, the omission is curious unless he has some other purpose in mind, such as universalizing Jesus' action by separating it from its geographical context (see the Note on 5:17). Second, he leaves out the location Caesarea Philippi for Peter's confession of Jesus as "The Christ of God," a geographical remark preserved in the other synoptic Gospels (see 9:18–20; Matt. 16:13; Mark 8:27). In this case, the city of Caesarea Philippi lies far to the north of the Sea of Galilee and, if Luke visits the Galilee area, he very possibly does not travel far from the lake. After all, nothing distinctive from Jesus' ministry occurs between Caesarea Philippi and the environs of the Sea of Galilee. Third, Luke neglects pointing to Jesus' ministry "beyond Jordan," that is, on the east bank of the river (Matt. 19:1; Mark 10:1). Instead, he inserts rather vague notices of Jesus' travel with disciples after departing Galilee (see the Notes on 9:51; 10:38; 14:25; 17:11; 18:35; 19:28). But much of this travel runs along and through the Jordan Valley. If Luke, in fact, comes to Galilee from Caesarea on the Mediterranean coast, he will surely return the same way rather than roaming through the Jordan Valley, taking a very roundabout and climatologically hot route back to the Mediterranean Sea which will have schooled him in the difficulty of the ascent to Jerusalem from Jericho, a climb that he does not seem to appreciate (see the Note on 19:28). In sum, we conclude that none of these omissions rule out the distinct possibility that Luke possesses a basic acquaintance of Galilean geography from his own visit.

One final observation is in order. Although all the Gospels preserve the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, Luke is the only writer to identify its locale: "a desert [uninhabited] place belonging to the city called Bethsaida" (9:10). How does he know this fact? The most natural response is that he learns it from someone who earlier is present, either from one of the early disciples or from one residing in the area. Because Bethsaida sits near the north shore of the Sea of Galilee a mere three miles east of Capernaum, a place easily reached by boat or by foot (see Matt. 14:13; Mark 6:32–33; John 6:17), and because from other clues noted above Luke likely visits this shoreline region, he is evidently in a firm position to point to the location of this remarkable event (see the Note on 9:10).