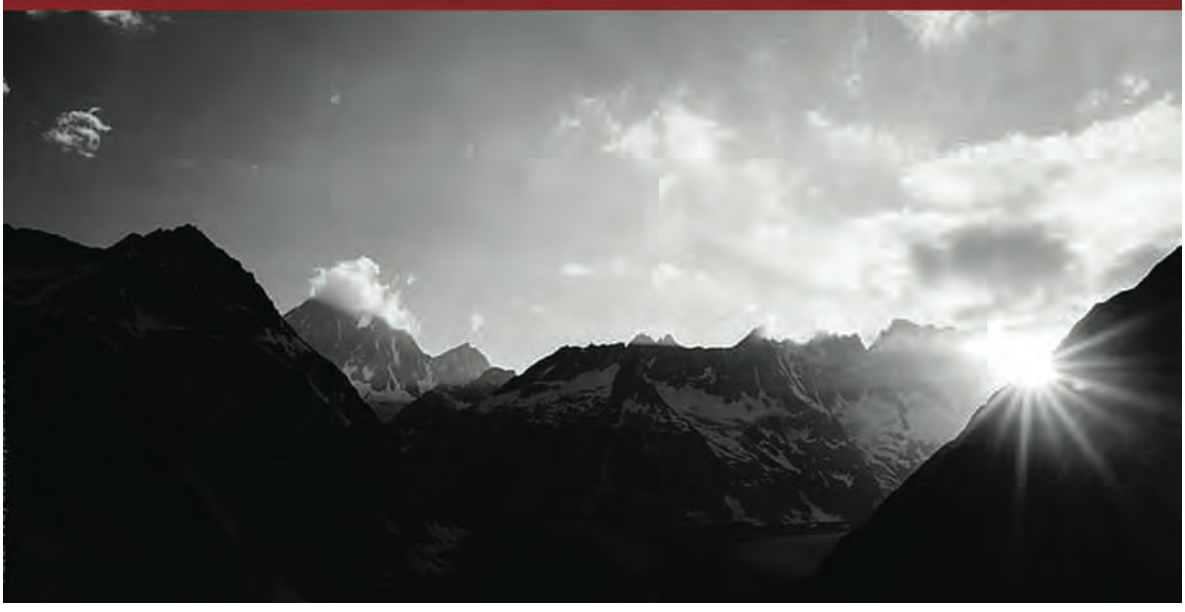


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SECOND EDITION

GROWING IN KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING
OF GOD THROUGH HIS WORD



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CHARLES F. STANLEY
GENERAL EDITOR



THOMAS NELSON
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THE
OLD TESTAMENT



THE BOOK OF

DANIEL



Daniel's life and ministry covered the entire seventy years of the Babylonian captivity. Deported to Babylon at approximately age sixteen and handpicked for government service, Daniel became God's prophetic mouthpiece to the Gentile and Jewish world, declaring His present and eternal purpose. Daniel, a Hebrew, became prime minister of Babylon and worked for at least three kings: Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius. This inspired work quotes both Nebuchadnezzar and Darius as declaring that Daniel's God is the living and true Lord of all.

The name *Daniye'l* or *Dani'el* means "God is my Judge." The Greek form *Daniel* in the Septuagint is the basis for the Latin and English titles.

The Book of Daniel details the life and prophecies of God's trusted servant. It includes a great deal of fulfilled prophecy and is quoted by Christ (Matt. 24:15). Several of the book's twelve chapters revolve around dreams, including God-given visions involving trees, animals, beasts, and images.

While many of the stories in Daniel are retold in children's books, those accounts are too important and relevant to relegate exclusively to the pages of childhood literature. To be sure, Daniel in the lions' den; the deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the fiery furnace; and the disembodied hand that spells doom for the Babylonian despot are all spectacular and gripping narratives. But what stands out in all of them is that our sovereign, omnipotent God consistently and swiftly reacts to the earnest prayers of His faithful servants.

Daniel prophesied concerning the rise and fall of the Antichrist and the glorious Second Coming of Christ. The Book of Daniel is often seen as a companion to the New Testament Book of Revelation, largely because both contain a great deal of similar prophetic imagery.

THEMES: God rules over the affairs of men, and no one can derail His plans or stop Him from acting. He is absolutely sovereign.

AUTHOR: Daniel.

TIME: During and shortly after the seventy-year Babylonian captivity of Judah (c. 605–530 B.C.).

STRUCTURE: The first six chapters of Daniel cover the personal biographies of several key people, plus some local history. The final six chapters cover visions and prophecies concerning God's sovereign hand in the affairs of men.

AS YOU READ DANIEL, WATCH FOR THE LIFE PRINCIPLES THAT PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS BOOK:

9. Trusting God means looking beyond what we can see to what God sees. *See Daniel 2:16.*
2. Obey God and leave all the consequences to Him. *See Daniel 3:15.*
17. We stand tallest and strongest on our knees. *See Daniel 6:10, 11.*
13. Listening to God is essential to walking with God. *See Daniel 9:3.*
1. Our intimacy with God—His highest priority for our lives—determines the impact of our lives. *See Daniel 11:32.*

Daniel and His Friends Obey God

1 In the third year of the reign of ^aJehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with ^asome of the articles of ¹the house of God, which he carried ^binto the land of Shinar to the house of his god; ^cand he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

³Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring ^asome of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, ⁴young men ^ain whom *there was* no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who *had* ability to serve in the king's palace, and ^bwhom they might teach the language and ¹literature of the Chaldeans. ⁵And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of *that time* they might ^aserve before the king. ⁶Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ^{7^a}To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: ^bhe gave Daniel *the name* Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

⁸But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself ^awith the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. ⁹Now ^aGod had brought Daniel into the favor and ¹goodwill of the chief of the

eunuchs. ¹⁰And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who *are* your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king."

¹¹So Daniel said to ¹the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹²"Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, *so* deal with your servants." ¹⁴So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.

¹⁵And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies. ¹⁶Thus ¹the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

¹⁷As for these four young men, ^aGod gave them ^bknowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had ^cunderstanding in all visions and dreams.

¹⁸Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹Then the king ¹interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore ^athey served before the king. ^{20^a}And in all matters of wisdom *and* understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* astrologers

1:1^a 2 Kin. 24:1, 2 1:2^a Jer. 27:19, 20 ^bZech. 5:11 ^c2 Chr. 36:7 ¹The temple 1:3^a Is. 39:7 1:4^a Lev. 24:19, 20 ^bActs 7:22 ¹Lit. *writing or book* 1:5^a Dan. 1:19 1:7^a 2 Kin. 24:17 ^bDan. 2:26; 4:8; 5:12 1:8^a Hos. 9:3 1:9^a Gen. 39:21 ¹*kindness* 1:11¹ Or *Melzar* 1:16¹ Or *Melzar* 1:17^a [James 1:5-7] ^bActs 7:22 ^c2 Chr. 26:5 1:19^a Gen. 41:46 ¹Lit. *talked with them* 1:20^a 1 Kin. 10:1

LIFE LESSONS

■ **1:8**—Godly obedience begins with an absolute commitment to honoring God above all else. When we “purpose in our hearts” to put God first, then the particular temptation or challenge cannot control us.

■ **1:17**—God has the power, wisdom, and resolve to equip you fully for whatever task or position He wants you to tackle. We will never fail in a God-given task because God failed to give us what we needed.

ANSWERS

TO LIFE'S QUESTIONS

HOW CAN I BECOME A MORE OBEDIENT CHRISTIAN?

| Dan. 1 |

Obedience is the bottom line in the Christian life. This means compliance to God's plan and pattern, observance of His commands, adherence to His standard, and submission to His will.

If we want to obey the Lord, we need to know what action God wants us to take, what attitude would most please Him, and what He requires of us. So how do we get ourselves to that point of obedience?

First, we have to know what God's commands are. We cannot obey what we do not know or understand—and we begin to understand God's perspective by becoming familiar with His Word.

However, simply knowing God's Word isn't enough. We must also tap into His power by submitting to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, who helps us relate His commands to our own situation and who assists us in determining the wisest course of action.

Once we decide to obey, we can expect a challenge to compromise. Since Satan doesn't want us to follow God, he will offer temptation after temptation to divert us or to weaken our devotion to the Lord through small steps of disobedience. Yet remember, partial obedience is disobedience.

It takes commitment and courage to obey God in the face of these challenges: courage to give up what we like in order to do what He asks; courage to do things that may bring unwelcome results; courage to rearrange our schedule to match His plan; courage to love the unlovely, to forgive the seemingly unforgivable, and to give when we want to keep.

How can we counter his challenge to compromise? By renewing our resolve to obey.

When Jesus neared the end of forty days of fasting and prayer following His baptism, Satan tempted Him to compromise His calling (Matt. 4:1–11). But Jesus stood up to Satan with courage, answering temptation after temptation with the Word of God. If we desire to have such resolute commitment to Him, we must love God above all else, be obedient in our actions, have a determined attitude, and be willing to suffer any consequences that result.

Whenever you feel tempted to disobey God, remember that your faithfulness and devotion to Christ are at stake. Ask yourself: “Is my understanding of Scripture increasing? Am I able to hold to God's plan without compromise? How committed am I to obeying God? If I love Him, I'll obey Him—so how much do I really love Him?”

See the Life Principles Index for further study:

2. OBEY GOD AND LEAVE ALL THE CONSEQUENCES TO HIM.
21. OBEDIENCE ALWAYS BRINGS BLESSING.

who *were* in all his realm. ^{21a}Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

2 Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; ^aand his spirit was *so* troubled that ^bhis sleep left him. ^{2a}Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. ³And the king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to ¹know the dream."

⁴Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, ^a"O' king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation."

⁵The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "My ¹decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be ^acut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap. ^{6a}However, if you tell the

dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation."

⁷They answered again and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation."

⁸The king answered and said, "I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm: ⁹if you do not make known the dream to me, *there is only* one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the ¹time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can ²give me its interpretation."

¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, "There is not a man on earth who can tell the king's matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has *ever* asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean. ¹¹*It is a* ¹difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king ^aexcept the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

^{1:21} ^aDan. 6:28; 10:1 ^{2:1} ^aGen. 40:5–8; 41:1, 8 ^bEsth. 6:1 ^{2:2} ^aEx. 7:11 ^{2:3} ¹Or *understand* ^{2:4} ^aDan. 3:9; 5:10; 6:6, 21

¹The original language of Daniel 2:4b through 7:28 is Aramaic. ^{2:5} ^aEzra 6:11 ¹The command

^{2:6} ^aDan. 5:16 ^{2:9} ¹Situation ²Or *declare to me* ^{2:11} ^aDan. 5:11 ¹Or *rare*

DREAMS AND VISIONS IN DANIEL

Daniel's God-given ability to interpret "visions and dreams" (1:17) served him well in his role as advisor to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, a man noted for his mysterious and troubling dreams. The following brief comparison of a dream of Nebuchadnezzar and a dream and vision of Daniel reveals a common theme in the Book of Daniel—the successive rise and fall of four kingdoms.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream	Daniel's Dream	Daniel's Vision	Interpretation
An image with a head of fine gold (2:32)	A beast like a lion with eagle's wings (7:4)		Babylon would establish itself as the first world empire (2:38; 7:17).
An image with a chest and arms of silver (2:32)	A beast like a bear with three ribs in its mouth (7:5)	A ram with two horns, one of which was higher than the other (8:3)	Medo-Persia would defeat Babylon and establish itself as the second world empire (2:39; 7:17; 8:20).
An image with a belly and thighs of bronze (2:32)	A beast like a leopard with four wings (7:6)	A male goat with a large horn, later replaced by four horns and a little horn (8:5–9)	Greece would defeat Medo-Persia and establish itself as the third world empire (2:39; 7:17; 8:21).
An image with legs of iron and feet of iron and clay (2:33)	A beast with iron teeth and ten horns (7:7)		Rome would defeat Greece and establish itself as the fourth world empire (2:40–43; 7:17).

¹²For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹³So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise *men*; and they sought ^aDaniel and his companions, to kill *them*.

God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

¹⁴Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise *men* of Babylon; ¹⁵he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, "Why is the decree from the king so ¹urgent?" Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.

¹⁶So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation. ¹⁷Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸^athat they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹⁹Then the secret was revealed to Daniel ^ain a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

²⁰Daniel answered and said:

^a"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,
^bFor wisdom and might are His.
²¹ And He changes ^athe times and the seasons;
^bHe removes kings and raises up kings;
^cHe gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.
²²^aHe reveals deep and secret things;
^bHe knows what *is* in the darkness, and ^clight dwells with Him.

²³"I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, And have now made known to me what we ^aasked of You, For You have made known to us the king's ¹demand."

Daniel Explains the Dream

²⁴Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise *men* of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: "Do not destroy the wise *men* of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation."

²⁵Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, "I have found a man of the ¹captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation."

²⁶The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?"

²⁷Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king has demanded, the wise *men*, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. ²⁸^aBut there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar ^bwhat will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these: ²⁹As for you, O king, thoughts came to your *mind while* on your bed, *about* what would come to pass after this; ^aand He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. ³⁰^aBut as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because

^{2:13} ^aDan. 1:19, 20 ^{2:15} ¹Or *harsh* ^{2:18} ^a[Matt. 18:19] ^{2:19} ^aJob 33:15 ^{2:20} ^aPs. 113:2 ^b[Jer. 32:19] ^{2:21} ^aEsth. 1:13 ^b[Ps. 75:6, 7] ^c[James 1:5] ^{2:22} ^aPs. 25:14 ^b[Heb. 4:13] ^cDan. 5:11, 14 ^{2:23} ^aDan. 2:18, 29, 30 ¹Lit. *word* ^{2:25} ¹Lit. *sons of the captivity* ^{2:28} ^aGen. 40:8 ^bGen. 49:1 ^{2:29} ^a[Dan. 2:22, 28] ^{2:30} ^aActs 3:12

LIFE LESSONS

■ **2:16**—Before Daniel ever brought his urgent request to God, he demonstrated his trust that the Lord would interpret the dream for the king.

Trusting God means looking beyond what we can see to what He sees.

I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for *our* sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, ^band that you may ¹know the thoughts of your heart.

³¹“You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor *was* excellent, stood before you; and its form *was* awesome. ³²^aThis image’s head *was* of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and ¹thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of ¹clay. ³⁴You watched while a stone was cut out ^awithout hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵^aThen the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became ^blike chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that ^cno trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image ^abecame a great mountain ^eand filled the whole earth.

³⁶“This *is* the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. ³⁷^aYou, O king, *are* a king of kings. ^bFor the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; ³⁸^aand wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given *them* into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—^byou *are* this head of gold. ³⁹But after you shall arise ^aanother kingdom ^binferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰And ^athe fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, *that kingdom* will break in pieces and crush

all the others. ⁴¹Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. ⁴²And *as* the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of clay, ^aso the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly ¹fragile. ⁴³As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴And in the days of these kings ^athe God of heaven will set up a kingdom ^bwhich shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; ^cit shall ¹break in pieces and ²consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. ⁴⁵^aInasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”

Daniel and His Friends Promoted

⁴⁶^aThen King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering ^band incense to him. ⁴⁷The king answered Daniel, and said, “Truly ^ayour God *is* the God of ^bgods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.” ⁴⁸^aThen the king promoted Daniel ^band gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and ^cchief administrator over all the wise *men* of Babylon. ⁴⁹Also Daniel petitioned

^{2:30}^b Dan. 2:47 ¹ Understand ^{2:32}^a Dan. 2:38, 45 ¹ Or *sides* ^{2:33}¹ Or *baked clay*, also vv. 34, 35, 42 ^{2:34}^a [Zech. 4:6]

^{2:35}^a [Rev. 16:14] ^b Hos. 13:3 ^c Ps. 37:10, 36 ^d [Is. 2:2, 3] ^e Ps. 80:9 ^{2:37}^a Jer. 27:6, 7 ^b Ezra 1:2 ^{2:38}^a Dan. 4:21, 22 ^b Dan. 2:32

^{2:39}^a Dan. 5:28, 31 ^b Dan. 2:32 ^{2:40}^a Dan. 7:7, 23 ^{2:42}^a Dan. 7:24 ¹ Or *brittle* ^{2:44}^a Dan. 2:28, 37 ^b [Luke 1:32, 33]

^c Is. 60:12 ¹ Or *crush* ² Lit. *put an end to* ^{2:45}^a Dan. 2:35 ^{2:46}^a Acts 10:25; 14:13 ^b Ezra 6:10 ^{2:47}^a Dan. 3:28,

29; 4:34–37 ^b [Deut. 10:17] ^{2:48}^a [Prov. 14:35; 21:1] ^b Dan. 2:6 ^c Dan. 4:9; 5:11

LIFE LESSONS

■ **2:44** — This, of course, is the everlasting kingdom Jesus invites us to take part in when we accept Him as our Savior (Luke 1:32, 33). When we face various difficulties and challenges, it can

give us great hope to remember that, whatever happens, we are intimately connected to the One who is always victorious.

the king, ^aand he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel ^bsat in ¹the gate of the king.

The Image of Gold

3 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* ¹sixty cubits *and* its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. ²And King Nebuchadnezzar sent *word* to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ³So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁴Then a herald cried ¹aloud: “To you it is commanded, ^aO peoples, nations, and languages, ⁵*that* at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; ⁶and whoever does not fall down and worship shall ^abe cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”

⁷So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, *and* lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down *and* worshiped the gold

image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Daniel's Friends Disobey the King

⁸Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans ^acame forward and accused the Jews. ⁹They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, ^a“O king, live forever! ¹⁰You, O king, have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the gold image; ¹¹and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. ¹²^aThere are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have ^bnot paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up.”

¹³Then Nebuchadnezzar, in ^arage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king. ¹⁴Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, “*Is it true*, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, *that* you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? ¹⁵Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, ^a*good!* But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. ^bAnd who *is* the god who will deliver you from my hands?”

¹⁶Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego

2:49 ^aDan. 1:7; 3:12 ^bEsth. 2:19, 21; 3:2 ¹The king's court 3:1 ¹About 90 feet 3:4 ^aDan. 4:1; 6:25 ¹Lit. with strength
3:6 ^aJer. 29:22 3:8 ^aDan. 6:12, 13 3:9 ^aDan. 2:4; 5:10; 6:6, 21 3:12 ^aDan. 2:49 ^bDan. 1:8; 6:12, 13
3:13 ^aDan. 2:12; 3:19 3:15 ^aLuke 13:9 ^bEx. 5:2

LIFE LESSONS

■ **3:15** — Nebuchadnezzar could not conceive of a deity with the power to frustrate his wishes. Hadn't he already destroyed Jerusalem, where the temple of the Lord had been? Yet God would not let Nebuchadnezzar's arrogant challenge stand. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego remained faithful to the Lord — regardless of whether or

not He saved them — because they acknowledged His right to their lives (Dan. 3:16, 17). You should do so as well. Whatever you're facing, obey God and leave the consequences to Him. He rescued His three faithful servants (vv. 24–26), and He can deliver you, too.

answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, “we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷If that *is the case*, our ^aGod whom we serve is able to ^bdeliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver *us* from your hand, O king. ¹⁸But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we “worship the gold image which you have set up.”

Saved in Fiery Trial

¹⁹Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, *and* cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace. ²¹Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. ²²Therefore, because the king’s command was ¹urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. ²³And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

²⁴Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste *and* spoke, saying to his ¹counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?”

They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.”

²⁵“Look!” he answered, “I see four men loose, “walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like ^bthe¹ Son of God.”

^{3:16}^a [Matt. 10:19] ^{3:17}^a [Is. 26:3, 4] ^b1 Sam. 17:37 ^{3:18}^a Job 13:15 ^{3:22}¹ Or *harsh* ^{3:24}¹ High officials
^{3:25}^a Is. 43:2 ^b [Ps. 34:7] ¹ Or *a son of the gods* ^{3:26}^a [Dan. 4:2, 3, 17, 34, 35] ¹ Lit. *door*

• LIFE EXAMPLES •

SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABED-NEGO

Facing the Fire

| Dan. 3:19–29 |

As Nebuchadnezzar scanned the horizon, he saw people of many nationalities bowing down to the image he had made. He had declared that when the music began, everyone was to fall in worship before the immense gold statue he had set up. As far as he could see, people were obeying.

But then the king received word that three Hebrews—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego—refused to bow. Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and threatened to throw the three men into a raging furnace. They faced a decision: obey God and face the fire, or pay homage to Nebuchadnezzar and dishonor God.

They chose the former—and God delivered them.

God is just as able to deliver you from whatever fire you face. Therefore, trust Him, for He is able and willing to help you today, regardless of your struggle.

*See the Life Principles
Index for further study:*

2. OBEY GOD AND LEAVE ALL THE
CONSEQUENCES TO HIM.

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

²⁶Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the ¹mouth of the burning fiery furnace *and* spoke, saying, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the ^aMost High God, come out, and come *here*.” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego

LIFE LESSONS

■ **3:26–29**—Nebuchadnezzar noticed at least two things about the three Hebrew young men: they served God (they worked for Him first and

foremost) and they trusted God (they placed their lives in His hands). God always acts on behalf of those who wait on, trust, honor, and obey Him.

came from the midst of the fire. ²⁷And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men ^aon whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.

²⁸Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His ^aAngel^l and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! ²⁹^aTherefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the ^bGod of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be ^ccut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; ^abecause there is no other God who can deliver like this."

³⁰Then the king ^lpromoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream

4 Nebuchadnezzar the king,

^aTo all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:

Peace be multiplied to you.

² I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders ^athat the Most High God has worked for me.

³ ^aHow great *are* His signs,
And how mighty His wonders!
His kingdom *is* ^ban
everlasting kingdom,
And His dominion *is* from
generation to generation.

⁴ I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace.
⁵I saw a dream which made me afraid,

^aand the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head ^btroubled me.

⁶Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise *men* of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.

⁷^aThen the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation. ⁸But at last Daniel came before me ^a(his name *is* Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; ^bin him *is* the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him, *saying*: ⁹"Belteshazzar, ^achief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God *is* in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.

¹⁰ "These *were* the visions of my head *while* on my bed:

I was looking, and behold,

^aA tree in the midst of the earth,
And its height was great.

¹¹ The tree grew and became strong;
Its height reached to the heavens,
And it could be seen to the
ends of all the earth.

¹² Its leaves *were* lovely,
Its fruit abundant,
And in it *was* food for all.

^aThe beasts of the field found
shade under it,
The birds of the heavens
dwelt in its branches,
And all flesh was fed from it.

¹³ "I saw in the visions of my head *while* on my bed, and there was ^aa watcher, ^ba holy one, coming down from heaven.

¹⁴He cried ^laloud and said thus:

^a"Chop down the tree and
cut off its branches,

3:27^a Heb. 11:34 3:28^a [Ps. 34:7, 8] ¹Or *angel* 3:29^a Dan. 6:26 ^bDan. 2:46, 47; 4:34-37 ^cDan. 2:5 ^dDan. 6:27 3:30¹ Lit. *caused to prosper* 4:1^a Dan. 3:4; 6:25 4:2^a Dan. 3:26 4:3^a 2 Sam. 7:16 ^b[Dan. 2:44; 4:34; 6:26] 4:5^a Dan. 2:28, 29 ^bDan. 2:1 4:7^a Dan. 2:2 4:8^a Dan. 1:7 ^bDan. 2:11; 4:18; 5:11, 14 4:9^a Dan. 2:48; 5:11 4:10^a Ezek. 31:3 4:12^a Lam. 4:20 4:13^a [Dan. 4:17, 23] ^bDeut. 33:2 4:14^a Ezek. 31:10-14 ¹Lit. *with strength*

- Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit.
^bLet the beasts get out from under it,
 And the birds from its branches.
- ¹⁵ Nevertheless leave the stump
 and roots in the earth,
Bound with a band of iron and bronze,
 In the tender grass of the field.
 Let it be wet with the dew of heaven,
 And *let* him graze with the beasts
 On the grass of the earth.
- ¹⁶ Let his heart be changed
 from *that of* a man,
 Let him be given the heart of a beast,
 And let seven ^atimes¹ pass over him.
- ¹⁷ “This decision *is* by the decree
 of the watchers,
 And the sentence by the
 word of the holy ones,
 In order ^athat the living may know
^bThat the Most High rules in
 the kingdom of men,
^cGives it to whomever He will,
 And sets over it the ^dlowest of men.’
- ¹⁸ “This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar,
 have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar,
 declare its interpretation, ^asince all
 the wise *men* of my kingdom are
 not able to make known to me the
 interpretation; but you *are* able, ^bfor
 the Spirit of the Holy God *is* in you.”

Daniel Explains the Second Dream

- ¹⁹ Then Daniel, ^awhose name *was*
 Belteshazzar, was astonished for a
 time, and his thoughts ^btroubled
 him. So the king spoke, and said,
 “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or
 its interpretation trouble you.”
 Belteshazzar answered and
 said, “My lord, *may* ^cthe dream
- ²⁰ ^a“The tree that you saw, which
 grew and became strong, whose
 height reached to the heavens and
 which *could be* seen by all the earth,
²¹whose leaves *were* lovely and its
 fruit abundant, in which *was* food
 for all, under which the beasts of the
 field dwelt, and in whose branches
 the birds of the heaven had their
 home— ²²^ait *is* you, O king, who have
 grown and become strong; for your
 greatness has grown and reaches to
 the heavens, ^band your dominion to
 the end of the earth.
- ²³ ^a“And inasmuch as the king saw a
 watcher, a holy one, coming down
 from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down
 the tree and destroy it, but leave its
 stump and roots in the earth, *bound*
 with a band of iron and bronze in the
 tender grass of the field; let it be wet
 with the dew of heaven, ^band let him
 graze with the beasts of the field, till
 seven ¹times pass over him’; ²⁴this is
 the interpretation, O king, and this is
 the decree of the Most High, which
 has come upon my lord the king:
²⁵They shall ^adrive you from men,
 your dwelling shall be with the beasts
 of the field, and they shall make you
^beat grass like oxen. They shall wet
 you with the dew of heaven, and
 seven ¹times shall pass over you, ^ctill
 you know that the Most High rules in
 the kingdom of men, and ^dgives it to
 whomever He chooses.
- ²⁶ “And inasmuch as they gave the
 command to leave the stump *and*

4:14^b Ezek. 31:12, 13 4:16^a Dan. 11:13; 12:7 ¹Possibly years 4:17^a Ps. 9:16; 83:18 ^bDan. 2:21; 4:25, 32; 5:21 ^cJer. 27:5–7 ^d1 Sam. 2:8
 4:18^a Gen. 41:8, 15 ^bDan. 4:8, 9; 5:11, 14 4:19^a Dan. 4:8 ^bDan. 7:15, 28; 8:27 ^c2 Sam. 18:32 ¹be for ²for 4:20^a Dan. 4:10–12
 4:22^a Dan. 2:37, 38 ^bJer. 27:6–8 4:23^a Dan. 4:13–15 ^bDan. 5:21 ¹Possibly years 4:25^a Dan. 4:32; 5:21
^bPs. 106:20 ^cDan. 4:2, 17, 32 ^dJer. 27:5 ¹Possibly years

LIFE LESSONS

- **4:26** — The God of heaven is sovereign over all—that’s the first lesson that every leader should learn. The Lord “rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men” (Dan. 4:17). Those who refuse to acknowledge that there is a higher authority will soon find themselves with no authority whatsoever (Ps. 53; Prov. 14:12).

• LIFE EXAMPLES •

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

A Lesson in Humility

| Dan. 4:30–37 |

Under Nebuchadnezzar's rule, Babylon expanded and grew in power and fame. The world looked to him as unto a god—and he unwisely started believing his own press.

“Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?” he congratulated himself (Dan. 4:30). Yet in a flash, Nebuchadnezzar lost his kingdom and lived like a wild beast (vv. 31–33). It was only after a period of severe humbling that he came to his senses: “Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven . . . And those who walk in pride He is able to put down” (v. 37).

God is love, but we must walk humbly before Him. When we begin to exalt ourselves, God will humble us (James 4:6). He deserves all our love and affection, and we must remember that He rules over all. We don't.

See the Life Principles Index for further study:

6. YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW, MORE THAN YOU SOW, AND LATER THAN YOU SOW.

roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that ^aHeaven¹ rules. ²⁷Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; ^abreak off your sins by *being* righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor. ^bPerhaps there may be ^ca ¹lengthening of your prosperity.”

Nebuchadnezzar's Humiliation

- ²⁸ All *this* came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹At the end of the twelve months he was walking ¹about the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰The king ^aspoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?”
- ³¹ ^aWhile the word *was still* in the king's mouth, ^ba voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has

departed from you! ³²And ^athey shall drive you from men, and your dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven ¹times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.”

- ³³ That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

- ³⁴ And ^aat the end of the ¹time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him ^bwho lives forever:

4:26 ^aMatt. 21:25 ¹God 4:27 ^a[1 Pet. 4:8] ^b[Ps. 41:1–3] ^c1 Kin. 21:29 ¹prolonging 4:29 ¹Or upon 4:30 ^aProv. 16:18
4:31 ^aLuke 12:20 ^bDan. 4:24 4:32 ^a[Dan. 4:25] ¹Possibly years 4:34 ^aDan. 4:26 ^b[Rev. 4:10] ¹Lit. days

For His dominion *is* ^can everlasting dominion,
And His kingdom *is* from generation to generation.

³⁵^aAll the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing;

^bHe does according to His will in the army of heaven
And *among* the inhabitants of the earth.

^cNo one can restrain His hand
Or say to Him, ^a“What have You done?”

³⁶ At the same time my reason returned to me, ^aand for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was ^brestored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was ^cadded to me. ³⁷Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, ^apraise and extol and honor the King of heaven, ^ball of whose works *are* truth, and His ways justice. ^cAnd those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

Belshazzar's Feast

5 Belshazzar the king ^amade a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand. ²While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels ^awhich his ¹father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which *had been* in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. ³Then they brought the gold ^avessels that had been taken from the temple of

the house of God which *had been* in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. ⁴They drank wine, ^aand praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.

⁵^aIn the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. ⁶Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his ^aknees knocked against each other. ⁷^aThe king cried ¹aloud to bring in ^bthe astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spoke, saying to the wise *men* of Babylon, “Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and *have* a chain of gold around his neck; ^cand he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.” ⁸Now all the king's wise *men* came, ^abut they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation. ⁹Then King Belshazzar was greatly ^atroubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were ¹astonished.

¹⁰The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying, “O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance change. ¹¹^aThere is a man in your kingdom in whom *is* the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your ¹father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your ¹father—

^{4:34}^c [Luke 1:33] ^{4:35}^a Is. 40:15, 17 ^bPs. 115:3; 135:6 ^cJob 34:29 ^dRom. 9:20 ^{4:36}^a Dan. 4:26 ^b2 Chr. 20:20 ^c[Prov. 22:4] ^{4:37}^a Dan. 2:46, 47; 3:28, 29 ^b[Ps. 33:4] ^cEx. 18:11 ^{5:1}^a Esth. 1:3 ^{5:2}^a Dan. 1:2 ¹Or ancestor ^{5:3}^a 2 Chr. 36:10 ^{5:4}^a Rev. 9:20 ^{5:5}^a Dan. 4:31 ^{5:6}^a Ezek. 7:17; 21:7 ^{5:7}^a Dan. 4:6, 7; 5:11, 15 ^bIs. 47:13 ^cDan. 6:2, 3 ¹Lit. *with strength* ^{5:8}^a Dan. 2:27; 4:7; 5:15 ^{5:9}^a Dan. 2:1; 5:6 ¹perplexed ^{5:11}^a Dan. 2:48; 4:8, 9, 18 ¹Or ancestor

LIFE LESSONS

■ **4:37**—God opposes human pride wherever He finds it, and He always will (Is. 13:11; James 4:6). Yet pride must be exposed for what it is before we can be freed from its hold. Just as He did with Nebuchadnezzar, sometimes the Lord will let us hit rock bottom so that we'll realize that every good thing we have is from Him and not because

of our own talents or efforts. King Nebuchadnezzar found that out the hard way. Although the prophet Daniel warned the king that he needed to repent of his pride and give the glory to God, Nebuchadnezzar refused to do it until the Lord intervened in his circumstances.

your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers. ¹²Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and ¹explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, ^awhom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.”

The Writing on the Wall Explained

¹³Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel ¹who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my ²father the king brought from Judah? ¹⁴I have heard of you, that ^athe ¹Spirit of God *is* in you, and *that* light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. ¹⁵Now ^athe wise *men*, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing. ¹⁶And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and ¹explain enigmas. ^aNow if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and *have* a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.”

¹⁷Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, “Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation. ¹⁸O king, ^athe Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your ¹father a kingdom and

majesty, glory and honor. ¹⁹And because of the majesty that He gave him, ^aall peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he ^bexecuted; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down. ²⁰^aBut when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. ²¹Then he was ^adriven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling *was* with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, ^btill he ¹knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.

²²“But you his son, Belshazzar, ^ahave not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. ²³^aAnd you have ¹lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the ^bvessels of ²His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, ^cwhich do not see or hear or know; and the God who *holds* your breath in His hand ^dand owns all your ways, you have not glorified. ²⁴Then the ¹fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.

²⁵“And this is the inscription that was written:

¹MENE, MENE, ²TEKEL, ³UPHARSIN.

5:12 ^aDan. 1:7; 4:8 ¹Lit. *untying knots* 5:13 ¹Lit. *who is of the sons of the captivity* ²Or ancestor 5:14 ^aDan. 4:8, 9, 18; 5:11, 12

¹Or *spirit of the gods* 5:15 ^aDan. 5:7, 8 5:16 ^aDan. 5:7, 29 ¹Lit. *untie knots* 5:18 ^aDan. 2:37, 38; 4:17, 22, 25 ¹Or ancestor

5:19 ^aJer. 27:7 ^bDan. 2:12, 13; 3:6 5:20 ^aDan. 4:30, 37 5:21 ^aDan. 4:32, 33 ^bEzek. 17:24 ¹Recognized 5:22 ^a2 Chr. 33:23; 36:12

5:23 ^aDan. 5:3, 4 ^bEx. 40:9 ^cPs. 115:5, 6 ^d[Jer. 10:23] ¹Exalted ²The temple 5:24 ¹Lit. *palm* 5:25 ¹Lit.

a mina (50 shekels) from the verb “to number” ²Lit. *a shekel* from the verb “to weigh”

³Lit. *and half-shekels* from the verb “to divide”; pl. of *Peres*, v. 28

LIFE LESSONS

■ **5:17**—Like Abraham long before him, Daniel had no interest in being made rich by a wicked ruler (Gen. 14:21–23). He also had no fear of the Babylonian king, for he feared the Lord above all (Ps. 118:6; Is. 51:12, 13; Matt. 10:28).

■ **5:23**—Whether men believe in God or not, He

keeps them alive. Whether they serve Him or not, He gives them breath. Whether they revere Him or not, they remain alive at His good pleasure. God rules all and deserves our love, obedience, and praise.

²⁶This is the interpretation of *each* word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; ²⁷TEKEL: “You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; ²⁸PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the ^aMedes and ^bPersians.”¹ ²⁹Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and *put* a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him ^athat he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Belshazzar’s Fall

^{30a}That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. ^{31a}And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, *being* about sixty-two years old.

The Plot Against Daniel

6 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; ²and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel *was* one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. ³Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, ^abecause an excellent spirit *was* in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. ^{4a}So the governors and satraps sought to find *some* charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he *was* faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him. ⁵Then these men said, “We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him concerning the law of his God.”

⁶So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus

^{5:27}^a Ps. 62:9 ^{5:28}^a Dan. 5:31; 9:1 ^b Dan. 6:28 ¹ Aram. *Paras*, consonant with *Peres* ^{5:29}^a Dan. 5:7, 16 ^{5:30}^a Jer. 51:31, 39, 57 ^{5:31}^a Dan. 2:39; 9:1 ^{6:3}^a Dan. 5:12 ^{6:4}^a Eccl. 4:4

• LIFE EXAMPLES •

DANIEL

A Man of Prayer

| Dan. 6 |

The story of Daniel in the lions’ den features such high drama that it is easy to overlook the reason why he ended up among hungry beasts.

Daniel was thrown to the lions because of his daily habit of prayer. Ordinarily, his faithfulness would have caused him no problem, but Daniel’s enemies decided to use his godliness against him by making it a crime to pray to anyone except King Darius (Dan. 6:7).

When Daniel learned of the offensive edict, he went home and prayed—right in front of his chamber windows, as always, where his enemies were certain to see him (Dan. 6:10). Daniel refused to alter his commitment to God in order to protect himself. He could have prayed in a windowless room. But Daniel knew that the eyes of more than his enemies were upon him—the Lord was watching, as were His frightened, exiled people. And because Daniel remained faithful, God delivered him from the lions (vv. 16–27).

May we always choose faithfulness to the Lord like Daniel did—even when faithlessness seems easier!

See the Life Principles Index for further study:

8. FIGHT ALL YOUR BATTLES ON YOUR KNEES AND YOU WIN EVERY TIME.

LIFE LESSONS

■ **6:5**—Why could the satraps and commissioners find no ground of accusation against Daniel? Because he was an upright, righteous man who loved God and obeyed Him wholeheartedly. The Lord will never lead us to do wrong. On the contrary, He will always lead us in holiness and truth,

working through us to show His love to others. As Romans 13:10 instructs, “Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.” His enemies could find nothing else, so they tried to use his devotion to God against him—never a wise decision (Dan. 6:24).

to him: “King Darius, live forever! ⁷All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have ^aconsulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. ⁸Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the ^alaw of the Medes and Persians, which ¹does not alter.” ⁹Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.

Daniel in the Lions’ Den

¹⁰Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open ^atoward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees ^bthree times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

¹¹Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. ¹²^aAnd they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king’s decree: “Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?”

The king answered and said, “The thing is true, ^baccording to the law of the Medes and Persians, which ¹does not alter.”

¹³So they answered and said before the king, “That Daniel, ^awho is ¹one of the captives from Judah, ^bdoes not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.”

¹⁴And the king, when he heard *these* words, ^awas greatly displeased with himself, and set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he ¹labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. ¹⁵Then these men ¹approached the king, and

said to the king, “Know, O king, that *it is* ^athe law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed.”

¹⁶So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast *him* into the den of lions. *But* the king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.” ¹⁷^aThen a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, ^band the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.

Daniel Saved from the Lions

¹⁸Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no ¹musicians were brought before him. ^aAlso his sleep ²went from him. ¹⁹Then the ^aking arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰And when he came to the den, he cried out with a ¹lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God, ^ahas your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?”

²¹Then Daniel said to the king, ^a“O king, live forever! ²²^aMy God sent His angel and ^bshut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.”

²³Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, ^abecause he believed in his God.

Darius Honors God

²⁴And the king gave the command, ^aand they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast *them* into the den of lions—*them*, ^btheir children,

6:6^aNeh. 2:3 6:7^aPs. 59:3; 62:4; 64:2–6 6:8^aEsth. 1:19, 8:8 ¹Lit. *does not pass away* 6:10^aJon. 2:4 ^bPs. 55:17 6:12^aDan. 3:8–12
^bDan. 6:8, 15 ¹Lit. *does not pass away* 6:13^aDan. 1:6; 5:13 ^bDan. 3:12 ¹Lit. *of the sons of the captivity* 6:14^aMark 6:26 ¹strove
6:15^aDan. 6:8, 12 ¹Lit. *thronged before* 6:17^aLam. 3:53 ^bMatt. 27:66 6:18^aDan. 2:1 ¹Exact meaning unknown ²Or *fled*
6:19^aDan. 3:24 6:20^aDan. 3:17 ¹Or *grieved* 6:21^aDan. 2:4; 6:6 6:22^aDan. 3:28 ^bHeb. 11:33 6:23^aHeb. 11:33 6:24^aDeut.
19:18, 19 ^bDeut. 24:16

ANSWERS

TO LIFE'S QUESTIONS

WHY DOES GOD ALLOW US TO FACE TESTS AND TRIALS?

| Dan. 6 |

We live in a fallen world—all of us will face times of suffering and heart-ache. Sometimes God keeps us from certain tests and trials, but at other times He allows them, knowing that the testing strengthens and perfects our faith in Him.

God wants us to have an unshakable faith—and if trials, tests, and suffering are what it takes for us to have it, then He'll allow them. Even the strongest faith in God does not mean we will be spared life's trials.

Daniel's faith was severely tested, but he emerged victorious. We're told that because Daniel was very successful and favored by King Darius, the other commissioners and satraps became jealous and decided to set a trap for him. Daniel 6:7 reports that the conspirators told the king, "All the governors of the kingdom . . . have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions."

As they knew he would, Daniel refused to compromise his love for God by worshiping King Darius, even though he understood that his obedience to the Lord would jeopardize his life (Dan. 6:16). He chose the path of other faithful believers who "did not love their lives to the death" (Rev. 12:11). And the conspirators caught him in the act of praying to the Lord and condemned him to the lions' den (Dan. 6:10–13).

Many of God's greatest saints—those in the Bible and others throughout Christian history—faced varying degrees of suffering. All of them, however, developed an unshakable

faith that provided the inner strength they needed to face every difficulty with hope and blessed assurance.

Do you have an unshakable faith? Are you in an extreme place of testing?

If so, do not be afraid. God has planned this very moment, and He will teach you how to trust Him perfectly.

A person with an unshakable faith never judges God's faithfulness by his or her feelings. Instead, he or she believes and trusts the Lord through every season of life, knowing that in the end, God's plan will emerge as perfect.

At times in your walk with God, He may require you to do something that, from a human perspective, seems unreasonable. From His viewpoint, however, it will be in perfect alignment with His Word and will turn out for your ultimate benefit.

Therefore, open your heart to His love and give Him the opportunity to prove His faithfulness. That is what Daniel did, and God made it possible for him to walk away from the lions' den with a song of victory on his lips (Dan. 6:19–28).

What is your level of faith in God? Do you believe that He will do exactly what He has promised? Are you convinced that He has already moved heaven and earth for you, and all you have to do is move toward His blessing?

See the Life Principles Index for further study:

20. DISAPPOINTMENTS ARE INEVITABLE; DISCOURAGEMENT IS A CHOICE.

26. ADVERSITY IS A BRIDGE TO A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

• LIFE PRINCIPLE 17 •

• • •

WE STAND TALLEST AND STRONGEST ON OUR KNEES.

| Dan. 6:10, 11 |

• • •

An older pastor got into the habit of challenging his congregation by quoting Jeremiah 33:3: “Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” Leveling his eyes at those gathered before him, he would say, “Try it. It works!”

This is a simple thought, but it carries a tremendous truth: God wants us to call to Him. In fact, many times He allows disappointments and difficulties into our lives so that we will draw closer to Him in intimate communion.

Prayer is a very powerful tool for believers—through it the Lord blesses us and frees us from bondage. In prayer we profess our need of Christ and ask for His solution to our problems. We also learn to worship Him and grow spiritually in His loving presence.

As we spend time with Him, God lovingly teaches us how to communicate with Him and listen for His still, small voice. Through it all, we grow deeper in our relationship with Him.

Several things are essential to establishing a powerful prayer life:

1. Choose a definite time to spend with the Lord in prayer.

Setting a time, whether early in the morning or late in the evening, is not the issue. Rather, consistency is the key. Ask God to show you the perfect time when you can be alone with Him.

2. Select a place where you can be alone with Him.

Although you may be limited as to where you can go to have time alone with the Lord, He will provide the perfect place for you to seek Him.

3. Make the commitment to pray daily.

This alone tells God that your heart is open to Him and that you want to learn more about Him and what He has planned for you.

4. Keep a journal that contains your requests and how God answers your prayers as a continuing testimony of God's work in your life.

Remember to write down the specific verses that He applies to your situation and the promises He gives you from His Word.

God honors the prayers of His people. If you go to Him—seeking Him earnestly and obeying His commands—He will provide all you need. So don't worry about what to say; the Holy Spirit will show you. At times, tears are just as effective as words, and God is sensitive to every tear you cry. Just as He understands the hurt you feel, so He knows how to deal with and guide you through any trial you must endure.

Therefore, whenever a trial strikes, turn to Him immediately in prayer. His presence will fill you with hope, and He

TEARS ARE JUST AS EFFECTIVE AS WORDS AT TIMES.

will give you the strength and wisdom you need to face the situation with confidence. Throughout your lifetime, you may face many difficult situations. Some will be very exciting, while others may feel as though they will break your heart. No matter what challenges come, you can be sure God is in the difficulty with you. He enjoys seeing you rejoice over His blessings, but He also mourns with you when tragedy strikes.

Always remember that God is bigger than any problem you face, and the distance between your success and failure or your victory and defeat is the distance between your knees and the floor as you kneel before your wondrous Lord and Savior in surrendered prayer. You are never taller or stronger than while on your knees! Why? Because He knows the way before you, and He can guide you through the difficulty if you will trust Him. And when you submit to Him in obedience, He applies His unlimited

resources, wisdom, and power to help you.

My challenge to you is simple: whatever you're facing, trust God with it. Ask Him to take away the anxiety, fear, and feelings of frustration. Have faith in the Lord and rest in His care. You will never feel more accepted or secure than you do in the presence of God. Victory awaits, so come to Him.

*See the Life Principles Index
for further study.*

**WHATEVER YOU'RE
FACING, TRUST
GOD WITH IT.**

and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.

^{25a}Then King Darius wrote:

To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:

Peace be multiplied to you.

²⁶ ^aI make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom *men must* ^btremble and fear before the God of Daniel.

^cFor He *is* the living God,
And steadfast forever;
His kingdom *is the one* which
shall not be ^ddestroyed,
And His dominion *shall*
endure to the end.

²⁷ He delivers and rescues,
^aAnd He works signs and wonders
In heaven and on earth,
Who has delivered Daniel from
the ¹power of the lions.

²⁸So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius ^aand in the reign of ^bCyrus the Persian.

Vision of the Four Beasts

7 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, ^aDaniel ¹had a dream and ^bvisions of his head *while* on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling ²the main facts.

²Daniel spoke, saying, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. ³And four great beasts ^acame up from the sea, each different from the other.

⁴The first *was* ^alike a lion, and had eagle’s wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a ^bman’s heart was given to it.

^{5a}“And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and *had* three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: ‘Arise, devour much flesh!’

⁶“After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had ^afour heads, and dominion was given to it.

⁷“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, ^aa fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It *was* different from all the beasts that *were* before it, ^band it had ten horns. ⁸I was considering the horns, and ^athere was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, *were* eyes like the eyes ^bof a man, ^cand a mouth speaking ¹pompous words.

Vision of the Ancient of Days

⁹ “I^a watched till thrones
were ¹put in place,
And ^bthe Ancient of Days was seated;
^cHis garment *was* white as snow,
And the hair of His head
was like pure wool.
His throne *was* a fiery flame,
^dIts wheels a burning fire;
¹⁰ ^aA fiery stream issued
And came forth from before Him.
^bA thousand thousands
ministered to Him;

6:25^a Dan. 4:1 6:26^a Dan. 3:29 ^bPs. 99:1 ^cDan. 4:34; 6:20 ^dDan. 2:44; 4:3; 7:14, 27 6:27^a Dan. 4:2, 3 ¹Lit. *hand* 6:28^a Dan. 1:21
^bEzra 1:1, 2 7:1^a [Amos 3:7] ^b[Dan. 2:28] ¹Lit. *saw* ²Lit. *the head or chief of the words* 7:3^a Rev. 13:1; 17:8 7:4^a Deut. 28:49
^bDan. 4:16, 34 7:5^a Dan. 2:39 7:6^a Dan. 8:8, 22 7:7^a Dan. 2:40 ^bRev. 12:3; 13:1 7:8^a Dan. 8:9 ^bRev. 9:7 ^cRev. 13:5, 6 ¹Lit.
great things 7:9^a [Rev. 20:4] ^bPs. 90:2 ^cRev. 1:14 ^dEzek. 1:15 ¹Or *set up* 7:10^a Is. 30:33; 66:15 ^bRev. 5:11

LIFE LESSONS

■ **6:28**— God desires for you to flourish, regardless of your circumstances. Daniel lived well and achieved great success in the midst of his

situation—and he did so by honoring the Lord above all else. We are called to do the same.

Ten thousand times ten thousand
stood before Him.

^cThe ¹court was seated,
And the books were opened.

¹¹“I watched then because of the sound
of the ¹pompous words which the horn
was speaking; ^aI watched till the beast
was slain, and its body destroyed and

given to the burning flame. ¹²As for the
rest of the beasts, they had their dominion
taken away, yet their lives were prolonged
for a season and a time.

¹³ “I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, ^aOne like the Son of Man,
Coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days,

7:10 ^c[Rev. 20:11–15] ¹Or judgment 7:11 ^a[Rev. 19:20; 20:10] ¹Lit. great 7:13 ^a[Matt. 24:30; 26:64;
Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Rev. 1:7, 12; 14:14]

LIFE LESSONS

■ **7:13**—In Matthew 26:64, Jesus explained that Daniel’s vision applied to His Second Coming, causing an uproar in the Sanhedrin. They considered it

blasphemy—but the only blasphemy committed that day was theirs for not recognizing that the Messiah was standing in front of them.

ALEXANDER’S EMPIRE (323 B.C.)

ALEXANDER'S EMPIRE

0 200 mi.
0 200 km

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In 334 B.C. Alexander, son of Philip II of Macedon, began a military quest to destroy the Persian Empire. Moving from west to east, he was victorious in battle at Issus in 333 B.C. against the Persian Darius III. Moving south, Alexander defeated the Phoenicians at Tyre in 332 B.C.,

swept through Palestine, and conquered Egypt in 331 B.C. Reengaging Darius III near Nineveh, Alexander defeated him again. Alexander’s campaigns continued east into India, securing vast territory for the Greek Empire. He died in Babylon in 323 B.C.

And they brought Him
near before Him.

¹⁴ ^aThen to Him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,
That all ^bpeoples, nations, and
languages should serve Him.
His dominion *is* ^can
everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom *the one*
Which shall not be destroyed.

Daniel's Visions Interpreted

¹⁵ I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit
¹within *my* body, and the visions of my
head troubled me. ¹⁶ I came near to one
of those who stood by, and asked him
the truth of all this. So he told me and
made known to me the interpretation of
these things: ¹⁷ Those great beasts, which
are four, *are* four ¹kings *which* arise out
of the earth. ¹⁸ But ^athe saints of the Most
High shall receive the kingdom, and pos-
sess the kingdom forever, even forever
and ever.⁷

¹⁹ Then I wished to know the truth
about the fourth beast, which was dif-
ferent from all the others, exceedingly
dreadful, *with* its teeth of iron and its
nails of bronze, *which* devoured, broke
in pieces, and trampled the residue with
its feet; ²⁰ and the ten horns that *were* on
its head, and the other *horn* which came
up, before which three fell, namely, that
horn which had eyes and a mouth which
spoke ¹pompous words, whose appear-
ance *was* greater than his fellows.

²¹ I was watching; ^aand the same horn
was making war against the saints, and
prevailing against them, ²² until the An-
cient of Days came, ^aand a judgment was
made *in favor* of the saints of the Most

High, and the time came for the saints to
possess the kingdom.

²³ Thus he said:

‘The fourth beast shall be
^aA fourth kingdom on earth,
Which shall be different from
all *other* kingdoms,
And shall devour the whole earth,
Trample it and break it in pieces.

²⁴ ^aThe ten horns *are* ten kings
Who shall arise from this kingdom.
And another shall rise after them;
He shall be different from
the first *ones*,
And shall subdue three kings.

²⁵ ^aHe shall speak *pompous* words
against the Most High,
Shall ^bpersecute¹ the saints
of the Most High,
And shall ^cintend to change
times and law.

Then ^a*the saints* shall be
given into his hand

^eFor a time and times and half a time.

²⁶ ^aBut the court shall be seated,
And they shall ^btake away
his dominion,
To consume and destroy *it* forever.

²⁷ Then the ^akingdom and dominion,
And the greatness of the kingdoms
under the whole heaven,
Shall be given to the people, the
saints of the Most High.

^bHis kingdom *is* an
everlasting kingdom,

^cAnd all dominions shall
serve and obey Him.⁷

²⁸ This *is* the end of the ¹account. As for
me, Daniel, ^amy thoughts greatly troubled

7:14 ^a[Matt. 28:18; John 3:35, 36; 1 Cor. 15:27; Eph. 1:22; Phil. 2:9–11; Rev. 1:6; 11:15] ^bDan. 3:4 ^cMic. 4:7 [Luke 1:33]; John 12:34;
Heb. 12:28 7:15 ¹Lit. *in the midst of its sheath* 7:17 ¹Representing their kingdoms, v. 23 7:18 ^aIs. 60:12–14 7:20 ¹Lit. *great*
things 7:21 ^aRev. 11:7; 13:7; 17:14 7:22 ^a[Rev. 1:6] 7:23 ^aDan. 2:40 7:24 ^aRev. 13:1; 17:12 7:25 ^aRev. 13:1–6 ^bRev. 17:6
^cDan. 2:21 ^dRev. 13:7; 18:24 ^eRev. 12:14 ¹Lit. *wear out* 7:26 ^a[Dan. 2:35; 7:10, 22] ^bRev. 19:20
7:27 ^aDan. 7:14, 18, 22 ^b[Luke 1:33, 34] ^cIs. 60:12 7:28 ^aDan. 8:27 ¹Lit. *word*

LIFE LESSONS

■ **7:25**—God’s blessing for obedience is not al-
ways obvious or immediate. Many believers have
died for their obedience, and many more will (Rev.

6:11). But the crown of life is well worth waiting
for (Rev. 2:10).

me, and my countenance changed; but I ^bkept the matter in my heart.”

Vision of a Ram and a Goat

8 In¹ the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me ^athe first time. ²I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I *was* in ^aShushan,¹ the ²citadel, which *is* in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai. ³Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns *were* high; but one *was* ^ahigher than the other, and the higher *one* came up last. ⁴I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could ¹withstand him; nor *was there any* that could deliver from his hand, ^abut he did according to his will and became great.

⁵And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat *had* a notable ^ahorn between his eyes. ⁶Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. ⁷And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, ¹attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.

⁸Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it ^afour notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven. ⁹^aAnd out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south,

^btoward the east, and toward the ^cGlorious Land. ¹⁰^aAnd it grew up to ^bthe host of heaven; and ^cit cast down *some* of the host and *some* of the stars to the ground, and trampled them. ¹¹^aHe even exalted *himself* as high as ^bthe Prince of the host; ^cand by him ^dthe daily *sacrifices* were taken away, and the place of ¹His sanctuary was cast down. ¹²Because of transgression, ^aan army was given over to the *horn* to oppose the daily *sacrifices*; and he cast ^btruth down to the ground. He ^cdid *all this* and prospered.

¹³Then I heard ^aa holy one speaking; and *another* holy one said to that certain *one* who was speaking, “How long *will* the vision *be*, concerning the daily *sacrifices* and the transgression ¹of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?”

¹⁴And he said to me, “For two thousand three hundred ¹days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.”

Gabriel Interprets the Vision

¹⁵Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and ^awas seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me ^bone having the appearance of a man. ¹⁶And I heard a man’s voice ^abetween *the banks of* the Ulai, who called, and said, ^b“Gabriel, make this *man* understand the vision.” ¹⁷So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and ^afell on my face; but he said to me, “Understand, son of man, that the vision *refers* to the time of the end.”

¹⁸^aNow, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; ^bbut he touched me, and stood me upright. ¹⁹And he said, “Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; ^afor at the appointed time the end *shall be*. ²⁰The ram which you saw, having the two

7:28^b Luke 2:19, 51 8:1^a Dan. 7:1 ¹The Hebrew language resumes in Dan. 8:1. 8:2^a Esth. 1:2, 2:8 ¹Or Susa ²Or fortified palace

8:3^a Dan. 7:5 8:4^a Dan. 5:19 ¹Lit. stand before him 8:5^a Dan. 8:8, 21; 11:3 8:7¹ Lit. struck 8:8^a Dan. 7:6; 8:22; 11:4

8:9^a Dan. 11:21 ^bDan. 11:25 ^cPs. 48:2 8:10^a Dan. 11:28 ^bIs. 14:13 ^cRev. 12:4 8:11^a Dan. 8:25; 11:36, 37 ^bJosh. 5:14

^cDan. 11:31; 12:11 ^dEx. 29:38 ¹The temple 8:12^a Dan. 11:31 ^bIs. 59:14 ^cDan. 8:4; 11:36 8:13^a Dan. 4:13, 23

¹Or making desolate 8:14¹ Lit. evening-mornings 8:15^{a1} Pet. 1:10 ^bEzek. 1:26 8:16^a Dan. 12:6, 7

^bLuke 1:19, 26 8:17^a Rev. 1:17 8:18^a Luke 9:32 ^bEzek. 2:2 8:19^a Hab. 2:3

horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹And the ¹male goat is the ²kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes ^ais the first king. ²²As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power.

²³“And in the latter time of their kingdom,
When the transgressors have reached their fullness,
A king shall arise,
^aHaving fierce ¹features,
Who understands sinister schemes.

²⁴ His power shall be mighty, ^abut not by his own power;
He shall destroy ¹fearfully,
^bAnd shall prosper and thrive;
^cHe shall destroy the mighty,
and also the holy people.

²⁵“Through ^ahis cunning
He shall cause deceit to prosper under his ¹rule;
^bAnd he shall exalt *himself* in his heart.
He shall destroy many in *their* prosperity.
^cHe shall even rise against the Prince of princes;
But he shall be ^dbroken without *human* ²means.

²⁶“And the vision of the evenings and mornings
Which was told is true;
^aTherefore seal up the vision,
For it refers to many days *in the future.*”

²⁷^aAnd I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king’s business. I was ¹astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.

Daniel’s Prayer for the People

9 In the first year ^aof Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans— ²in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years *specified* by the word of the LORD through ^aJeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

³^aThen I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. ⁴And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, “O ^aLord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, ⁵^awe have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. ⁶^aNeither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. ⁷O Lord, ^arighteousness *belongs* to You, but to us shame of face, as *it is* this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which

^{8:21}^a Dan. 11:3 ¹shaggy male ²Lit. king, representing his kingdom, Dan. 7:17, 23 8:22^a Dan. 11:4 8:23^a Deut. 28:50 ¹Lit. countenance 8:24^a Rev. 17:13 ^bDan. 11:36 ^cDan. 7:25 ¹Or extraordinarily 8:25^a Dan. 11:21 ^bDan. 8:11–13; 11:36; 12:7 ^cRev. 19:19, 20 ^dJob 34:20 ¹Lit. hand ²Lit. hand 8:26^a Ezek. 12:27 8:27^a Dan. 7:28; 8:17 ¹amazed 9:1^a Dan. 1:21 9:2^a 2 Chr. 36:21 9:3^a Neh. 1:4 9:4^a Ex. 20:6 9:5^a 1 Kin. 8:47, 48 9:6^a 2 Chr. 36:15 9:7^a Neh. 9:33

LIFE LESSONS

■ **8:21**—This prophecy about Alexander the Great is so precise and clear that critics have tried to claim that it was written after the fact. God gives prophecies like this to build our trust in the truth and accuracy of His Word.

■ **9:3**—It had been nearly seventy years since Daniel was carried off to Babylon. As he read Jeremiah’s prophecy, he realized the time of captiv-

ity was almost complete (Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10). So in one of the greatest prayers in the Bible, he sought guidance from the Lord through fasting and prayer. As a result of his sincere devotion, the Lord sent Gabriel to give him understanding about how God would restore Jerusalem (Dan. 9:20–27).

ANSWERS

TO LIFE'S QUESTIONS

HOW CAN I LEARN TO PRAY EFFECTIVELY?

| Dan. 9:1–23 |

Daniel demonstrates how to pray with both power and confidence. When he discovered that Jeremiah had prophesied that the Babylonian captivity would last seventy years and was almost over (Dan. 9:2), he fell to his knees and began interceding for his people (vv. 4–19).

In Daniel 9, we see a great example of what prayer should be. Its focus is on almighty God and His character. It includes sincere confession, unselfishness, and dependence on the Word of God.

Such prayer has great power. In Daniel's case, God sent the angel Gabriel with His answer even before the prophet had completed his supplication.

To seek God during your own hardship, assume the humble stance that Daniel did—go to your knees. Model your prayer after Daniel's. As he said in Daniel 11:32, "The people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits."

The Bible tells us, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16). *Effective*—that is exactly what we want our prayers to be, especially in a crisis. When we are obedient to God and are seeking Him in sincerity and truth, we can feel confident that He will answer our earnest prayers. What are His requirements for us?

Requirement 1: Fervent prayer.

Fervent prayers are filled with passion and the acknowledgment of personal helplessness. They also have a narrow focus on some specific difficulty. Scripture calls this type of prayer "laboring fervently" (Col. 4:12).

Requirement 2: Righteousness.

At salvation, we become rightly related to God as His children. He permanently seals us with the Holy Spirit and declares us righteous forever because of our position in Jesus Christ. But the Bible also uses the word *righteous* to describe a believer's conduct. This means that to be called a "righteous person," we must be found in Christ (Phil. 3:9) *and* make it a habit to obey God (Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10). This also means that as we pray, we listen intently and submit ourselves wholeheartedly to Him—confessing our sin and obeying all He tells us to do. If we willingly and knowingly engage in sin, then we do not live righteously and our prayers will lack power.

When the Lord hears the impassioned prayer of a righteous person whose life reflects God's ways, Scripture promises that the Holy Spirit will begin His divine work (Rom. 8:26, 27; 1 Cor. 2:12, 13). God responds with great power to the prayers of even one righteous person. Friend, that person can be *you!*

See the Life Principles Index for further study:

- 8. FIGHT ALL YOUR BATTLES ON YOUR KNEES AND YOU WIN EVERY TIME.
- 17. WE STAND TALLEST AND STRONGEST ON OUR KNEES.

You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.

⁸“O Lord, to us *belongs* shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. ^{9a}To the Lord our God *belong* mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. ¹⁰We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. ¹¹Yes, ^aall Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the ^bLaw of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. ¹²And He has ^aconfirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; ^bfor under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.

^{13a}“As *it is* written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; ^byet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth. ¹⁴Therefore the LORD has ^akept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for ^bthe LORD our God *is* righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice. ¹⁵And now, O Lord our God, ^awho brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself ^ba name, as *it is* this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly!

¹⁶“O Lord, ^aaccording to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, ^bYour holy mountain; because for

our sins, ^cand for the iniquities of our fathers, ^dJerusalem and Your people ^eare a reproach to all *those* around us. ¹⁷Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, ^aand ^bfor the Lord’s sake ¹cause Your face to shine on ²Your sanctuary, ^cwhich is desolate. ^{18a}O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes ^band see our desolations, and the city ^cwhich is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. ¹⁹O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy

²⁰Now while I *was* speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, ²¹yes, while I *was* speaking in prayer, the man ^aGabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, ¹being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. ²²And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. ²³At the beginning of your supplications the ¹command went out, and I have come to tell *you*, for you *are* greatly ^abeloved; therefore ^bconsider the matter, and understand the vision:

²⁴“Seventy ¹weeks are determined
For your people and for
your holy city,
To finish the transgression,
²To make an end of sins,
^aTo make reconciliation for iniquity,

9:9^a [Ps. 130:4, 7] 9:11^a Is. 1:3–6 ^bLev. 26:14 9:12^a Zech. 1:6 ^bLam. 1:12; 2:13 9:13^a Deut. 28:15–68 ^bIs. 9:13 9:14^a Jer. 31:28; 44:27 ^bNeh. 9:33 9:15^a Neh. 1:10 ^bNeh. 9:10 9:16^a 1 Sam. 12:7 ^bZech. 8:3 ^cEx. 20:5 ^dLam. 2:16 ^ePs. 79:4 9:17^a Num. 6:24–26 ^bLam. 5:18 ^c[John 16:24] ¹Be gracious ²The temple 9:18^a Is. 37:17 ^bEx. 3:7 ^cJer. 25:29 9:21^a Dan. 8:16 ¹Or *being weary with weariness* 9:23^a Dan. 10:11, 19 ^bMatt. 24:15 ¹Lit. *word* 9:24^a [Is. 53:10] ¹Lit. *sevens*, and so throughout the chapter ²So with Qr., LXX, Syr., Vg.; Kt., Theodotion *To seal up*

LIFE LESSONS

■ **9:18**—We bring our prayers to God on the basis of who He is, not on the basis of who we are

or what we have done. We stand tallest and strongest when we bow in prayer.

^bTo bring in everlasting righteousness,
To seal up vision and prophecy,
^cAnd to anoint ³the Most Holy.

²⁵“Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth
of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until ^aMessiah ^bthe Prince,
There shall be seven weeks
and sixty-two weeks;
The ¹street shall be built
again, and the ²wall,
Even in troublesome times.

²⁶“And after the sixty-two weeks
^aMessiah shall ¹be cut off,
^bbut not for Himself;
And ^cthe people of the prince
who is to come
^dShall destroy the city and
the sanctuary.
The end of it shall be with a flood,
And till the end of the war
desolations are determined.
²⁷ Then he shall confirm ^aa ¹covenant
with ^bmany for one week;
But in the middle of the week
He shall bring an end to
sacrifice and offering.
And on the wing of abominations
shall be one who makes desolate,
^cEven until the consummation,
which is determined,
Is poured out on the ²desolate.”

Vision of the Glorious Man

10 In the third year of Cyrus king
of Persia a message was revealed
to Daniel, whose ^aname was called

Belteshazzar. The message *was* true, ¹but
the appointed time *was* long; and he
understood the message, and had un-
derstanding of the vision. ²In those days
I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks.
³I ate no ¹pleasant food, no meat or wine
came into my mouth, nor did I anoint
myself at all, till three whole weeks were
fulfilled.

⁴Now on the twenty-fourth day of the
first month, as I was by the side of the
great river, that *is*, the ¹Tigris, ⁵I lifted my
eyes and looked, and behold, a certain
man clothed in ^alinen, whose waist *was*
^bgirded with gold of Uphaz! ⁶His body
was like beryl, his face like the appear-
ance of lightning, his eyes like torches
of fire, his arms and feet like burnished
bronze in color, ^aand the sound of his
words like the voice of a multitude.

⁷And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision,
for the men who were with me did not
see the vision; but a great terror fell upon
them, so that they fled to hide them-
selves. ⁸Therefore I was left alone when
I saw this great vision, and no strength
remained in me; for my ¹vigor was
turned to ²frailty in me, and I retained
no strength. ⁹Yet I heard the sound of
his words; and while I heard the sound
of his words I was in a deep sleep on my
face, with my face to the ground.

Prophecies Concerning Persia and Greece

¹⁰^aSuddenly, a hand touched me,
which made me tremble on my knees
and *on* the palms of my hands. ¹¹And he
said to me, “O Daniel, ^aman greatly be-
loved, understand the words that I speak

9:24 ^bRev. 14:6 ^cPs. 45:7 ³The Most Holy Place 9:25 ^aJohn 1:41; 4:25 ^bIs. 55:4 ¹Or *open square* ²Or *moat* 9:26 ^a[Is. 53:8];
Matt. 27:50; Mark 9:12; 15:37; [Luke 23:46; 24:26]; John 19:30; Acts 8:32 ^b[1 Pet. 2:21] ^cMatt. 22:7 ^dMatt. 24:2; Mark 13:2;
Luke 19:43, 44 ¹Suffer the death penalty 9:27 ^aIs. 42:6 ^b[Matt. 26:28] ^cDan. 11:36 ¹Or *treaty* ²Or *desolator*
10:1 ^aDan. 1:7 ¹Or *and of great conflict*; 10:3 ¹*desirable* 10:4 ¹Heb. *Hiddekel* 10:5 ^aEzek. 9:2; 10:2
^bRev. 1:13; 15:6 10:6 ^a[Rev. 1:15] 10:8 ¹Lit. *splendor* ²Lit. *ruin* 10:10 ^aDan. 9:21 10:11 ^aDan. 9:23

LIFE LESSONS

■ **9:26**—Only one figure in history fits the exact
time frame of this prophecy: Jesus of Nazareth.
He died—was “cut off”—for our sins, not for
His own sins, since He never committed any. “He
was wounded for our transgressions” (Is. 53:5).

■ **10:7**—The Lord told Moses, “No man shall see
Me, and live” (Ex. 33:20). Paul said God dwells “in
unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or
can see” (1 Tim. 6:16). And yet even God’s invisible
presence makes men tremble.

to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.

¹²Then he said to me, ^a“Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, ^byour words were heard; and I have come because of your words. ¹³^aBut the prince

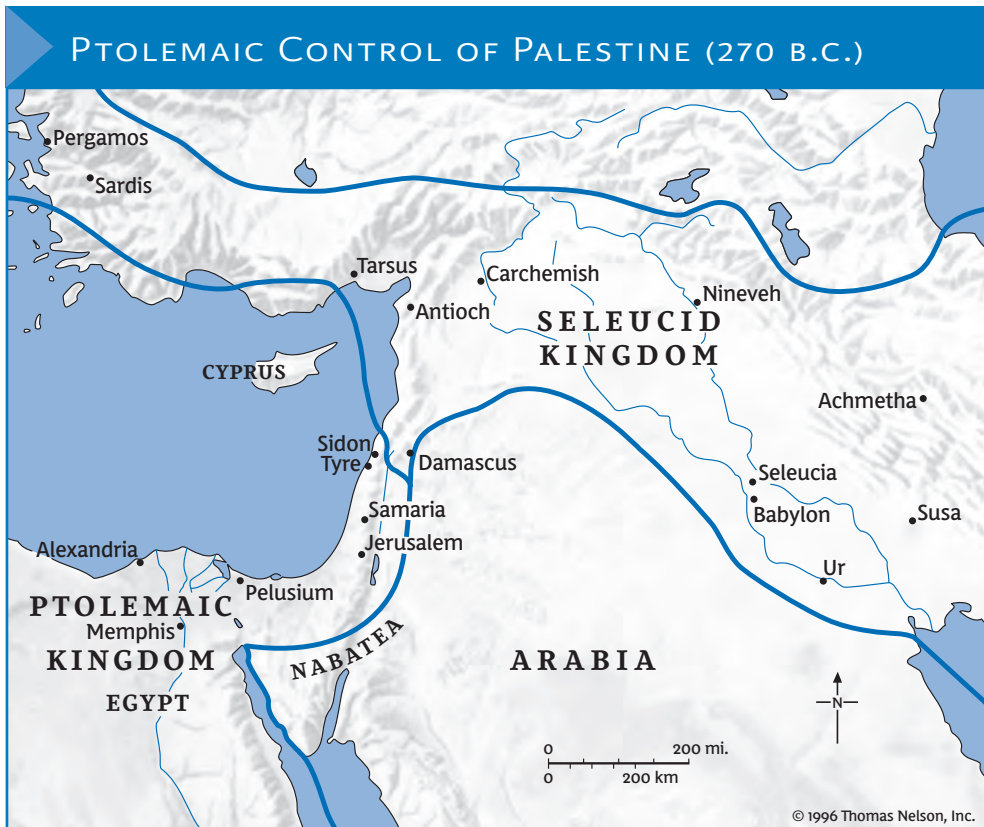
of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, ^bMichael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people ^ain the latter days, ^bfor the vision refers to many days yet to come.”

10:12^a Rev. 1:17 ^b Acts 10:4 10:13^a Dan. 10:20 ^b Dan. 10:21; 12:1 10:14^a Dan. 2:28 ^b Dan. 8:26; 10:1

LIFE LESSONS

■ **10:13** — We get a small glimpse here of the spiritual realities of unseen warfare that takes place around the prayers of God’s people. Although our prayers are heard at once in heaven (Dan. 10:12), God’s answer may delay in coming for reasons

that are unknown and imperceptible to us — yet they are still coming (2 Cor. 4:18; Heb. 11:1). Therefore, as Jesus said, we “ought to pray and not lose heart” (Luke 18:1).



Alexander’s death resulted in the breakup of his empire into smaller kingdoms ruled by his generals. Two of these generals, Ptolemy and Seleucus, became established in the regions around Palestine. By 275 B.C. the Ptolemies were controlling

Egypt, Palestine, Cyrene, Phoenicia, Cyprus, and the coast of Asia Minor. The Seleucids controlled Mesopotamia, Syria, and most of Asia Minor and Iran.

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¹⁵When he had spoken such words to me, ^aI ¹turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. ¹⁶And suddenly, ^aone having the likeness of the ¹sons of men ^btouched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, “My lord, because of the vision ^cmy sorrows have ²overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. ¹⁷For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.”

¹⁸Then again, *the one* having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. ¹⁹And he said, “O man greatly beloved, ^bfear not! Peace *be* to you; be strong, yes, be strong!”

So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”

²⁰Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight ^awith the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. ²¹But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, ^aexcept Michael your prince.

11 “Also ^ain the first year of ^bDarius the Mede, I, *even* I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.) ²And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than *them* all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. ³Then ^aa mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and ^bdo according to his will. ⁴And when he has arisen, ^ahis kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity ^bnor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these.

Warring Kings of North and South

⁵“Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as *one* of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion *shall be* a great dominion. ⁶And at the end of *some* years they shall join forces, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her ¹authority, and neither he nor his ¹authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in *those* times. ⁷But from a branch of her roots *one* shall arise in his place, who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail. ⁸And he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their ¹princes *and* their precious articles of silver and gold; and he shall continue *more* years than the king of the North.

⁹“Also *the king of the North* shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land. ¹⁰However his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and *one* shall certainly come ^aand overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return ^bto his fortress and stir up strife.

¹¹“And the king of the South shall be ^amoved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the ^bmultitude shall be given into the hand of his *enemy*. ¹²When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be ¹lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail. ¹³For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment.

10:15^a Dan. 8:18; 10:9 ¹Lit. set 10:16^a Dan. 8:15 ^bJer. 1:9 ^cDan. 10:8, 9 ¹Theodotion, Vg. *the son*; LXX *a hand* ²Or *turned upon*
 10:19^a Dan. 10:11 ^bJudg. 6:23 10:20^a Dan. 10:13 10:21^a [Rev. 12:7] 11:1^a Dan. 9:1 ^bDan. 5:31 11:3^a Dan. 7:6; 8:5 ^bDan. 8:4;
 11:6, 36 11:4^a Zech. 2:6 ^bDan. 8:22 11:6¹ Lit. *arm* 11:8¹ Or *molded images* 11:10^a Is. 8:8 ^bDan. 11:7
 11:11^a Prov. 16:14 ^b[Ps. 33:10, 16] 11:12¹ Proud

¹⁴“Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. Also, ¹violent men of your people shall exalt themselves ²in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall ^afall. ¹⁵So the king of the North shall come and ^abuild a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the ¹forces of the South shall not withstand *him*. Even his choice troops *shall have* no strength to resist. ¹⁶But he who comes against him ^ashall do according to his own will, and ^bno one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his ¹power.

¹⁷“He shall also ^aset his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and ¹upright ones with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand *with him*, ^bor be for him. ¹⁸After this he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many. But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him. ¹⁹Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall ^astumble and fall, ^band not be found.

11:14^a Job 9:13 ¹Or robbers, lit. sons of breakage ²Lit. to establish 11:15^a Ezek. 4:2; 17:17 ¹Lit. arms 11:16^a Dan. 8:4, 7 ^bJosh. 1:5
¹Lit. hand 11:17^a 2 Chr. 20:3 ^bDan. 9:26 ¹Or bring equitable terms 11:19^a Jer. 46:6 ^bPs. 37:36



²⁰“There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes *on* the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle. ²¹And in his place ^ashall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. ²²With the ¹force of a ^aflood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, ^band also the prince of the covenant. ²³And after the league *is made* with him ^ahe shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small *number of* people. ²⁴He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do *what* his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, ¹spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but *only* for a time.

²⁵“He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him. ²⁶Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall ¹be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. ²⁷Both these kings’ hearts *shall be* bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end *will still be* at the ^aappointed time. ²⁸While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be *moved* against the holy covenant; so he shall do *damage* and return to his own land.

The Northern King’s Blasphemies

²⁹“At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. ³⁰^aFor ships from ¹Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do *damage*.

“So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. ³¹And ¹forces shall be mustered by him, ^aand they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily *sacrifices*, and place *there* the abomination of desolation. ³²Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall ¹corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*. ³³And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet *for many* days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. ³⁴Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by ¹intrigue. ³⁵And *some* of those of understanding shall fall, ^ato refine them, purify *them*, and make *them* white, *until* the time of the end; because *it is still* for the appointed time.

³⁶“Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall ^aexalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. ³⁷He shall regard neither the ¹God of his fathers nor the desire of women, ^anor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above *them* all. ³⁸But in their place he shall honor a

11:21^a Dan. 7:8 11:22^a Dan. 9:26 ^b Dan. 8:10, 11 ¹ Lit. *arms* 11:23^a Dan. 8:25 11:24¹ *booty* 11:26¹ Or *overflow* 11:27^a Hab. 2:3
11:30^a Jer. 2:10 ¹ Heb. *Kittim*, western lands, especially Cyprus 11:31^a Dan. 8:11–13; 12:11 ¹ Lit. *arms* 11:32¹ *pollute*
11:34¹ Or *slipperiness, flattery* 11:35^a Dan. 12:10 11:36^a Dan. 7:8, 25 11:37^a Is. 14:13 ¹ Or *gods*

LIFE LESSONS

■ **11:32** — Intimacy with God is His highest priority for us. The more we know and love God, the better we will serve Him — not in our own power, but in His. It will always be important to stand for God’s truth and do His will wholeheartedly, but it will be especially imperative as the last days approach. We cannot be swayed or intimidated

by evil; rather, we must stay close to God and serve Him with utmost obedience and love.

■ **11:37** — Most conservative scholars believe this verse describes the Antichrist, “who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2 Thess. 2:4).

god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. ³⁹Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance *its* glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for ¹gain.

The Northern King's Conquests

⁴⁰“At the ^atime of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him ^blike a whirlwind, with chariots, ^chorsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm *them*, and pass through. ⁴¹He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: ^aEdom, Moab, and the ¹prominent people of Ammon. ⁴²He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of ^aEgypt shall not escape. ⁴³He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians *shall follow* ^aat his heels. ⁴⁴But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and ^athe glorious holy mountain; ^byet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.

Prophecy of the End Time

12 “At that time Michael shall stand up,

The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people;

11:39 ¹profit 11:40 ^aDan. 11:27, 35; 12:4, 9 ^bIs. 21:1 ^cRev. 9:16 11:41 ^aIs. 11:14 ¹Lit. *chief of the sons of Ammon* 11:42 ^aJoel 3:19 11:43 ^aEx. 11:8 11:45 ^aPs. 48:2 ^bRev. 19:20 12:1 ^aJer. 30:7 ^bRom. 11:26 ^cEx. 32:32 12:2 ^a[John 5:28, 29] ^b[Is. 66:24] ¹Lit. *abhorrence* 12:3 ^aMatt. 13:43 ^b[James 5:19, 20] ^c1 Cor. 15:41 12:4 ^aRev. 22:10 ^bAmos 8:12 12:5 ^aDan. 10:4 12:6 ^aEzek. 9:2 ^bDan. 8:13; 12:8 12:7 ^aDeut. 32:40 ^bDan. 4:34 ^cDan. 7:25 ^dLuke 21:24 ^eDan. 8:24

^aAnd there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, *Even* to that time. And at that time your people ^bshall be delivered, Every one who is found ^cwritten in the book.

² And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,

^aSome to everlasting life, Some to shame ^band everlasting ¹contempt.

³ Those who are wise shall ^ashine Like the brightness of the firmament,

^bAnd those who turn many to righteousness

^cLike the stars forever and ever.

⁴“But you, Daniel, ^ashut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall ^brun to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

⁵Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that ^ariverbank. ⁶And *one* said to the man clothed in ^alinen, who *was* above the waters of the river, ^b“How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders *be*?”

⁷Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who *was* above the waters of the river, when he ^aheld up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him ^bwho lives forever, ^cthat *it shall be* for a time, times, and half *a time*; ^aand when the power of ^ethe holy people has been completely shattered, all these *things* shall be finished.

LIFE LESSONS

■ **12:2**—Any hardships that God asks us to endure for His sake will one day seem like nothing in comparison to His reward (Rom. 8:18). However, if we fail to believe in Christ or choose anything in His

place, a terrible judgment awaits (Rev. 20:11–15). As Jesus said in Mark 8:35, “Whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.”

⁸Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, “My lord, what shall be the end of these things?”

⁹And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. ¹⁰Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, ^bbut the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but ^cthe wise shall understand.

¹¹“And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.

¹²Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

¹³“But you, go your way till the end; ^afor you shall rest, ^band will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.”

12:10 ^aZech. 13:9 ^bIs. 32:6, 7 ^cJohn 7:17; 8:47 12:13 ^aRev. 14:13 ^bPs. 1:5

LIFE LESSONS

■ **12:8**—Are there some Bible passages that confuse you? Take heart. Even the great prophet Daniel couldn’t understand some of the visions given to Him, because they were for a time yet to

come. Yet God will help us understand whatever we need to know through His Spirit and in His time (1 Cor. 2:10–13).

EXPANSION OF PALESTINE UNDER THE MACCABEES (166 B.C.)



Israel was plunged into a grueling period of religious persecution with the accession of Antiochus IV to the throne of the Seleucid kingdom in 175 B.C. From circumcision to Sabbath observance, many Jewish customs were outlawed. Opposition to Antiochus’s policies centered around Mattathias’s home in Modein, a town seventeen miles northwest of Jerusalem. In 167 B.C. Antiochus desecrated the temple itself by erecting a statue of Zeus and sacrificing a pig. A guerrilla war ensued. In 164 B.C. Mattathias’s son, Judas Maccabeus, successfully recaptured Jerusalem and reconsecrated the temple. Judas’s brothers, Simon and Jonathan, continued the struggle against Syrian tyranny until 142 B.C. After that date, Israel remained practically independent until the Romans invaded Palestine in 63 B.C.

THE
NEW TESTAMENT



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

LUKE



Luke, a physician, writes with the compassion and warmth of a family doctor as he carefully documents the perfect humanity of the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. He emphasizes Jesus' ancestry, birth, and early life before moving carefully and chronologically through His earthly ministry.

At the very beginning of his Gospel, Luke tells his audience that he wasn't an original apostle or even an eyewitness to Jesus' words and works. Many believe Luke came to faith in Christ through the ministry of the apostle Paul, whom he befriended and accompanied on some of his missionary journeys. Luke may have been a Gentile convert to Christianity, making him the only non-Jewish writer of a New Testament book (he also penned the Acts of the Apostles). Luke has a fondness for parables; of the twenty-five he includes in his Gospel, seventeen do not appear anywhere else. He also describes seven of Jesus' miracles that were not mentioned in the other two Synoptic Gospels.

Luke's Gospel includes many details of Jesus' life omitted from the other three Gospels. Only Luke records a detailed account of Jesus' birth and the events surrounding it. He includes the angelic announcement to Jesus' mother, Mary, and the fact that she would give birth to the Messiah. He also records the story of the conception and birth of John the Baptist. Only Luke includes an account of the boyhood of Jesus.

Luke presents Jesus as a man of great compassion and intense emotions. Luke alone, for example, records how Jesus looked out over the holy city of Jerusalem and wept over its coming destruction. Luke also shows us that Jesus had a very sympathetic attitude toward women, the poor, the sinners, the sick, and the dying. Christ's resurrection ensures that His purpose is fulfilled: "To seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

Kata Loukon, "According to Luke," is the ancient title added to this Gospel at a very early date. The Greek name Luke appears only three times in the New Testament (Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24).

THEME: Jesus is the Son of Man.

AUTHOR: Luke.

TIME: Most scholars believe Luke wrote his Gospel a few years before he wrote the Acts of the Apostles, which he likely penned circa A.D. 63 or 64.

STRUCTURE: Luke starts his Gospel by explaining that he had thoroughly investigated Jesus' story and had written his account based on his careful investigations. The first two chapters of this Gospel contain several incidents unique to Luke that are related to Jesus' birth and early life.

AS YOU READ LUKE, WATCH FOR THE LIFE PRINCIPLES THAT PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS BOOK:

1. Our intimacy with God—His highest priority for our lives—determines the impact of our lives. *See Luke 1:4; 3:11; 5:16; 10:42; 11:1; 12:15.*
22. To walk in the Spirit is to obey the initial promptings of the Spirit. *See Luke 4:1.*
10. If necessary, God will move heaven and earth to show us His will. *See Luke 7:30.*
23. You can never outgive God. *See Luke 14:14.*
30. An eager anticipation of the Lord's return keeps us living productively. *See Luke 21:34.*

Dedication to Theophilus

1 Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those ^athings which ¹have been fulfilled among us, ²just as those who ^afrom the beginning were ^beyewitnesses and ministers of the word ^cdelivered them to us, ³it seemed good to me also, having ¹had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, ^amost excellent Theophilus, ^{4a}that

you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

John's Birth Announced to Zacharias

⁵There was ^ain the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, ^bof the division of ^cAbijah. His ^awife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elizabeth. ⁶And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances

1:1^a John 20:31 ¹Or are most surely believed 1:2^a Acts 1:21, 22 ^bActs 1:2 ^cHeb. 2:3 1:3^a Acts 1:1 ¹Lit. accurately followed 1:4^a [John 20:31] 1:5^a Matt. 2:1 ^b1 Chr. 24:1, 10 ^cNeh. 12:4 ^dLev. 21:13, 14

LIFE LESSONS

■ 1:3— Luke wanted the recipient of his letter to know that he had accurately researched the life of Jesus Christ. Because he was a physician, we can conclude that his research was investigative and extensive. Only after careful study that probably included interviewing the people who knew the Savior personally, did he begin to write.

■ 1:4— The Lord wants us to know that the Bible contains His truth, and it can be trusted in all that it declares (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 4:12). The Gospels are not a collection of religious fairy tales. They are the source of eternal truth—God’s revelation of Himself and how we can have an intimate relationship with Him.



After the death of Herod the Great, his kingdom was divided among his three sons. Philip ruled in the northeast areas of Gaulanitis, Iturea, Trachonitis, Batanea, and Auranitis. Herod Antipas ruled in Galilee and Perea. Archelaus ruled Judea, Samaria, and Idumea, but only until A.D. 6; after that, Roman procurators were appointed by Caesar to rule those regions.

of the Lord blameless. ⁷But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

⁸So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, ⁹according to the custom of the priesthood, ¹his lot fell ^ato burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. ¹⁰^aAnd the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of ^athe altar of incense. ¹²And when Zacharias saw *him*, ^ahe was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

¹³But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and ^ayou shall call his name John. ¹⁴And you will have joy and gladness, and ^amany will rejoice at his birth. ¹⁵For he will be ^agreat in the sight of the Lord, and ^bshall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, ^ceven from his mother’s womb. ¹⁶And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷^aHe will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

¹⁸And Zacharias said to the angel, ^a“How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.”

¹⁹And the angel answered and said to him, “I am ^aGabriel, who stands in the

presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you ^tthese glad ^btidings. ²⁰But behold, ^ayou will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.”

²¹And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. ²²But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

²³So it was, as soon as ^athe days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. ²⁴Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, ²⁵“Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on *me*, to ^atake away my reproach among people.”

Christ’s Birth Announced to Mary

²⁶Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin ^abetrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name *was* Mary. ²⁸And having come in, the angel said to her, ^a“Rejoice, highly favored *one*, ^bthe Lord is with you; ¹blessed are you among women!”

²⁹But ¹when she saw *him*, ^ashe was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. ³⁰Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid,

^{1:9} ^aEx. 30:7, 8 ¹ *he was chosen by lot* ^{1:10} ^aLev. 16:17 ^{1:11} ^aEx. 30:1 ^{1:12} ^aLuke 2:9 ^{1:13} ^aLuke 1:57, 60, 63 ^{1:14} ^aLuke 1:58
^{1:15} ^a[Luke 7:24–28] ^bNum. 6:3 ^cJer. 1:5 ^{1:17} ^aMal. 4:5, 6; Matt. 3:2; 11:14 ^{1:18} ^aGen. 17:17 ^{1:19} ^aDan. 8:16 ^bLuke 2:10 ¹ *this good news* ^{1:20} ^aEzek. 3:26; 24:27 ^{1:23} ^a2 Kin. 11:5 ^{1:25} ^aGen. 30:23 ^{1:27} ^aMatt. 1:18 ^{1:28} ^aDan. 9:23 ^bJudg. 6:12
¹NU omits *blessed are you among women* ^{1:29} ^aLuke 1:12 ¹NU omits *when she saw him*

LIFE LESSONS

■ **1:17**—In ancient times, the arrival of a king was heralded by a forerunner so that his subjects could prepare for his appearance. The cities would hold great festivals, and everything would be cleaned and repaired so that the king would see his dominion at its best. When the King of kings came to earth, the same was true (Is. 40:3; Mal. 3:1). John the Baptist preached “in the spirit and power of Elijah” to prepare the people for the

coming of Jesus Christ. Like Elijah before him, he bravely and powerfully proclaimed the truth of the people’s need for repentance and salvation.

■ **1:30**—The favor of God is worth any discomfort it might entail. The Lord chose Mary to give birth to the Savior of the world, but she also had to bear the public shame of people not understanding what He was doing through her and through Jesus.

Mary, for you have found ^afavor with God. ^{31a}And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and ^bshall call His name JESUS. ³²He will be great, ^aand will be called the Son of the Highest; and ^bthe Lord God will give Him the ^cthrone of His ^dfather David. ^{33a}And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

³⁴Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I ¹do not know a man?”

³⁵And the angel answered and said to her, ^a“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called ^bthe Son of God. ³⁶Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. ³⁷For ^awith God nothing will be impossible.”

³⁸Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

³⁹Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, ^ato a city of Judah, ⁴⁰and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was ^afilled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴²Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, ^a“Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb! ⁴³But why *is* this

granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. ^{45a}Blessed *is* she who ¹believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.”

The Song of Mary

⁴⁶And Mary said:

^a“My soul ¹magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ And my spirit has ^arejoiced
 in ^bGod my Savior.
⁴⁸ For ^aHe has regarded the lowly
 state of His maidservant;
 For behold, henceforth ^ball
 generations will call me blessed.
⁴⁹ For He who is mighty ^ahas
 done great things for me,
 And ^bholy *is* His name.
⁵⁰ And ^aHis mercy *is* on those
 who fear Him
 From generation to generation.
⁵¹ ^aHe has shown strength with His arm;
^bHe has scattered *the* proud in the
 imagination of their hearts.
^{52a}He has put down the mighty
 from *their* thrones,
 And exalted *the* lowly.
⁵³ He has ^afilled *the* hungry
 with good things,
 And *the* rich He has sent away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped His ^aservant Israel,
^bIn remembrance of *His* mercy,
^{55a}As He spoke to our ^bfathers,
 To Abraham and to his ^cseed forever.”

1:30^a Luke 2:52 1:31^a Is. 7:14 ^b Luke 2:21 1:32^a Mark 5:7 ^b 2 Sam. 7:12, 13, 16 ^c 2 Sam. 7:14–17 ^d Matt. 1:1 1:33^a [Dan. 2:44]
 1:34^a Am a virgin 1:35^a Matt. 1:20 ^b [Heb. 1:2, 8] 1:37^a Jer. 32:17 1:39^a Josh. 21:9 1:41^a Acts 6:3 1:42^a Judg. 5:24
 1:45^a John 20:29 ¹ Or *believed that there* 1:46^a 1 Sam. 2:1–10 ¹ Declares the greatness of 1:47^a Hab. 3:18 ^b 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3
 1:48^a Ps. 138:6 ^b Luke 11:27 1:49^a Ps. 71:19; 126:2, 3 ^b Ps. 111:9 1:50^a Ps. 103:17 1:51^a Ps. 98:1; 118:15 ^b [1 Pet. 5:5]
 1:52^a 1 Sam. 2:7, 8 1:53^a [Matt. 5:6] 1:54^a Is. 41:8 ^b [Jer. 31:3] 1:55^a Gen. 17:19 ^b [Rom. 11:28] ^c Gen. 17:7

LIFE LESSONS

■ **1:37**— We can trust God even in the most difficult of circumstances, because no problem is too tough for Him to handle and no challenge is beyond His power to overcome. He has the ability to do what He says He will do.

■ **1:45**— What would have happened had Mary not believed Gabriel’s words? Would she have

disqualified herself from being the mother of Jesus? The fact is, she did believe and she obeyed God. Her obedience set the stage for the Lord’s blessings. He not only fulfilled His word in her, He also used her to accomplish His prophecy to our lost and dying world.

⁵⁶And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

Birth of John the Baptist

⁵⁷Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. ⁵⁸When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they ^arejoiced with her.

Circumcision of John the Baptist

⁵⁹So it was, ^aon the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. ⁶⁰His mother answered and said, ^a"No; he shall be called John."

⁶¹But they said to her, ^a"There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." ⁶²So they made signs to his father—what he would have him called.

⁶³And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, ^a"His name is John." So they all marveled. ⁶⁴Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue *loosed*, and he spoke, praising God. ⁶⁵Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶And all those who heard *them* ^akept *them* in their hearts, saying, ^a"What kind of child will this be?" And ^bthe hand of the Lord was with him.

Zacharias' Prophecy

⁶⁷Now his father Zacharias ^awas filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

⁶⁸"Blessed^a is the Lord God of Israel,
For ^bHe has visited and
redeemed His people,

1:58^a [Rom. 12:15] 1:59^a Gen. 17:12 1:60^a Luke 1:13, 63 1:66^a Luke 2:19 ^b Acts 11:21 1:67^a Joel 2:28 1:68^a 1 Kin. 1:48 ^b Ex. 3:16

• LIFE EXAMPLES •

MARY

Woman of Faith

| Luke 1:31–38 |

When Mary was young, the customary age for betrothal was thirteen or fourteen. More than likely, she was a young girl when Joseph asked her to marry him. Can you imagine the excitement she felt? But that quickly changed the moment the angel Gabriel stepped into her presence and announced that she would have a son and that He would be the Savior of the world.

Jewish tradition demanded harsh treatment for unmarried pregnant women. Religious leaders would have dealt with her severely. Yet Mary remained strong in her faith. She knew that she had heard God's Word spoken to her, and she believed that He would provide what she needed to do His will.

She was an ordinary girl with extraordinary, godly character that gave her an uncommon faith. Completely trusting in God, in every way Mary was a good and faithful servant. And she provides a model of inspiration for each one of us. For the most part, she lived her life in relative obscurity—happy and even grateful to be used by God. Yet today the world continues to celebrate her obedience to the Lord.

See the Life Principles Index for further study:

2. OBEY GOD AND LEAVE ALL THE CONSEQUENCES TO HIM.
5. GOD DOES NOT REQUIRE US TO UNDERSTAND HIS WILL,
JUST OBEY IT, EVEN IF IT SEEMS UNREASONABLE.

69^aAnd has raised up a horn
of salvation for us
In the house of His servant David,
70^aAs He spoke by the mouth
of His holy prophets,
Who *have been* ^bsince the
world began,
71 That we should be saved
from our enemies
And from the hand of all who hate us,
72^aTo perform the mercy
promised to our fathers
And to remember His holy covenant,
73^aThe oath which He swore to
our father Abraham:
74 To grant us that we,
Being delivered from the
hand of our enemies,
Might ^aserve Him without fear,
75^aIn holiness and righteousness before
Him all the days of our life.

76^a“And you, child, will be called the
^aprophet of the Highest;
For ^byou will go before the face of
the Lord to prepare His ways,
77 To give ^aknowledge of
salvation to His people
By the remission of their sins,
78 Through the tender mercy of our God,
With which the ¹Dayspring from
on high ²has visited us;
79^aTo give light to those who sit in
darkness and the shadow of death,
To ^bguide our feet into
the way of peace.”

1:69^a Ps. 132:17 1:70^a Rom. 1:2 ^b Acts 3:21 1:72^a Lev. 26:42 1:73^a Gen. 12:3; 22:16–18 1:74^a [Heb. 9:14] 1:75^a [Eph. 4:24]
1:76^a Matt. 3:3; 11:9 ^b Is. 40:3 1:77^a [Mark 1:4] 1:78¹ Lit. *Dawn*; the Messiah ² NU shall visit 1:79^a Is. 9:2 ^b [John 10:4;
14:27; 16:33] 1:80^a Luke 2:40 ^b Matt. 3:1 2:2^a Acts 5:37 2:4^{a1} Sam. 16:1 ^b Matt. 1:16 2:5^a [Matt. 1:18] ¹ NU omits
wife 2:7^a Matt. 1:25 ¹ feed trough 2:9^a Luke 1:12 ¹ NU omits behold 2:10^a Luke 1:13, 30

80^aSo ^athe child grew and became
strong in spirit, and ^bwas in the deserts
till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Christ Born of Mary

2 And it came to pass in those days
that a decree went out from Caesar
Augustus that all the world should be
registered. ^{2a}This census first took place
while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³So
all went to be registered, everyone to his
own city.

⁴Joseph also went up from Galilee,
out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to
^athe city of David, which is called Bethle-
hem, ^bbecause he was of the house and
lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with
Mary, ^ahis betrothed ⁴wife, who was with
child. ⁶So it was, that while they were
there, the days were completed for her
to be delivered. ⁷And ^ashe brought forth
her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him
in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a
¹manger, because there was no room for
them in the inn.

Glory in the Highest

⁸Now there were in the same country
shepherds living out in the fields, keep-
ing watch over their flock by night. ⁹And
¹behold, an angel of the Lord stood be-
fore them, and the glory of the Lord
shone around them, ^aand they were
greatly afraid. ¹⁰Then the angel said to
them, ^a“Do not be afraid, for behold,
I bring you good tidings of great joy

LIFE LESSONS

■ **1:74, 75**— Those who fear God do not have to fear anything else. When we commit ourselves wholeheartedly to serving the Lord, we can enjoy the great blessings that come with holiness and righteousness.

■ **1:78**— Zacharias was referring to the prophecy of Malachi 4:2, “To you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise.” This of course, was speaking about the Messiah. By first listing God’s covenants to David and Abraham (Luke 1:69, 73),

and then referring to the last thing the Lord said in Malachi, Zacharias was confirming that God had indeed kept every aspect of His promise to send the Savior. The good news that Israel had been longing to hear had finally arrived.

■ **2:7**— Amazingly, God stepped into this world not as the reigning King with pomp and ceremony, but as the humble Child who was wrapped in simple swaddling clothes. Far from a royal crib, Jesus’ first resting place was a primitive feeding trough.

^bwhich will be to all people. ^{11a}For there is born to you this day in the city of David ^ba Savior, ^cwho is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a ¹manger.”

^{13a}And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

¹⁴ “Glory^a to God in the highest,
And on earth ^bpeace,
^cgoodwill^l toward men!”

¹⁵So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷Now when they had seen *Him*, they made ¹widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. ¹⁸And all those who heard *it* marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. ^{19a}But Mary kept all these things and pondered *them* in her heart. ²⁰Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and ^apraising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

Circumcision of Jesus

^{21a}And when eight days were completed ¹for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called ^bJESUS, the name given by the angel ^cbefore He was conceived in the womb.

Jesus Presented in the Temple

²²Now when ^athe days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present *Him* to the Lord ^{23a}(as it is written in the law of the Lord, ^b“Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD”), ²⁴and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, ^a“A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

Simeon Sees God's Salvation

²⁵And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name *was* Simeon, and this man *was* just and devout, ^awaiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not ^asee death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷So he came ^aby the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, ²⁸he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

²⁹“Lord, ^anow You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word;
³⁰ For my eyes ^ahave seen Your salvation
³¹ Which You have prepared before
the face of all peoples,
^{32a} A light to *bring* revelation
to the Gentiles,
And the glory of Your people Israel.”

³³And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold,

2:10 ^bGen. 12:3 2:11 ^aIs. 9:6 ^bMatt. 1:21 ^cActs 2:36 2:12 ¹feed trough 2:13 ^aDan. 7:10 2:14 ^aLuke 19:38 ^bIs. 57:19 ^c[Eph. 2:4, 7]

¹NU toward men of goodwill 2:17 ¹NU omits widely 2:19 ^aGen. 37:11 2:20 ^aLuke 19:37 2:21 ^aLev. 12:3 ^b[Matt. 1:21]

^cLuke 1:31 ¹NU for His circumcision 2:22 ^aLev. 12:2–8 2:23 ^aDeut. 18:4 ^bEx. 13:2, 12, 15 2:24 ^aLev. 12:2, 8

2:25 ^aMark 15:43 2:26 ^a[Heb. 11:5] 2:27 ^aMatt. 4:1 2:29 ^aGen. 46:30 2:30 ^a[Is. 52:10]

2:32 ^aActs 10:45; 13:47; 28:28 2:33 ¹NU And His father and mother

LIFE LESSONS

■ **2:10**—God cares about everyone, despite his or her occupation or standing in society. By Jewish tradition, shepherds were known to be spiritually unclean. Yet the Lord chose these men to proclaim the birth announcement of His

Son—the Savior of the world. The angel told them not to fear, but to open their eyes and watch for the wonderfully good thing that the Lord was doing for them and for the whole world—something that would bring great joy to everyone.

this *Child* is destined for the ^afall and rising of many in Israel, and for ^ba sign which will be spoken against ³⁵(yes, ^aa sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

who did not depart from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers ^anight and day. ³⁸And coming in that instant she gave thanks to ¹the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who ^alooked for redemption in Jerusalem.

Anna Bears Witness to the Redeemer

³⁶Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of ^aAsher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; ³⁷and this woman *was* a widow ¹of about eighty-four years,

The Family Returns to Nazareth

³⁹So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their *own* city, Nazareth. ⁴⁰^aAnd the Child grew and became strong ¹in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

2:34^a [1 Pet. 2:7, 8] ^b Acts 4:2; 17:32; 28:22 2:35^a Ps. 42:10 2:36^a Josh. 19:24 2:37^a 1 Tim. 5:5 ¹ NU until she was eighty-four 2:38^a Mark 15:43 ¹ NU God 2:40^a Luke 1:80; 2:52 ¹ NU omits in spirit

LIFE LESSONS

■ **2:40** — Jesus had to grow, just like every other human child. He became strong in spirit and filled with wisdom because He grew up in the grace of

God. The Lord’s lovingkindness is what makes us both strong and wise.

• LIFE EXAMPLES •

SIMEON

Whole in the Arms of God

| Luke 2:25–35 |

As he made his way to the temple, we may wonder if Simeon thought, *The years must be catching up to me. How long will I have to wait for God to answer my prayer?* How long had it been since he had received the special word of the Lord? Five? Ten years? It didn’t matter. Each day brought him closer to the fulfillment of God’s promise that “he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ” (Luke 2:26).

At that moment, a young couple emerged onto the temple porch with a newborn son. *The Child!* Simeon thought. He approached the young family, took the babe in his arms, and immediately knew *this* was the One for whom he had waited so long.

The Lord always keeps His promises. And this faithful servant of God had the opportunity to witness the Savior as promised. He took Jesus in his arms and blessed Him saying, “Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation” (Luke 2:29, 30).

See the Life Principles Index for further study:

- 5. GOD DOES NOT REQUIRE US TO UNDERSTAND HIS WILL, JUST OBEY IT, EVEN IF IT SEEMS UNREASONABLE.
- 9. TRUSTING GOD MEANS LOOKING BEYOND WHAT WE CAN SEE TO WHAT GOD SEES.
- 14. GOD ACTS ON BEHALF OF THOSE WHO WAIT FOR HIM.

The Boy Jesus Amazes the Scholars

⁴¹His parents went to ^aJerusalem ^bevery year at the Feast of the Passover. ⁴²And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the ^acustom of the feast. ⁴³When they had finished the ^adays, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And ¹Joseph and His mother did not know *it*; ⁴⁴but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among *their* relatives and acquaintances. ⁴⁵So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. ⁴⁶Now so it was *that* after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷And ^aall who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. ⁴⁸So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously."

⁴⁹And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be ^aabout ^bMy Father's business?" ⁵⁰But ^athey did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

Jesus Advances in Wisdom and Favor

⁵¹Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was ¹subject to

them, but His mother ^akept all these things in her heart. ⁵²And Jesus ^aincreased in wisdom and stature, ^band in favor with God and men.

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, ^aPontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, ²¹while ^aAnnas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to ^bJohn the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. ^{3a}And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance ^bfor the remission of sins, ^{4a}as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying:

^a"The voice of one crying
in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the LORD;
Make His paths straight.
⁵ Every valley shall be filled
And every mountain and
hill brought low;
The crooked places shall
be made straight
And the rough ways smooth;
⁶ And ^aall flesh shall see the
salvation of God.'"

2:41^a John 4:20 ^bDeut. 16:1, 16 2:42^a Ex. 23:14, 15 2:43^a Ex. 12:15 ¹NU *His parents* 2:47^a Matt. 7:28; 13:54; 22:33 2:49^a John 9:4 ^b[Luke 4:22, 32] 2:50^a John 7:15, 46 2:51^a Dan. 7:28 ¹obedient 2:52^a [Col. 2:2, 3] ^b1 Sam. 2:26 3:1^a Matt. 27:2 3:2^a Acts 4:6 ^bLuke 1:13 ¹NU, M *in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas* 3:3^a Mark 1:4 ^bLuke 1:77 3:4^a Is. 40:3-5 3:6^a Is. 52:10

LIFE LESSONS

■ **2:47** — The wisdom of God is astounding. Even the teachers of the Law and temple scholars were completely amazed at Christ's spiritual insight — especially at such a young age. Yet remember, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding" (Prov. 9:10). The Lord's remarkable knowledge and understanding are available to all who truly believe in Him (Jer. 33:3; 1 Cor. 1:18 — 2:16; James 1:5, 6). Do you need God's wisdom for your situation? Then trust and obey Him, because He will surely reveal Himself to you as you seek Him (Luke 11:9, 10).

■ **2:50** — Even as a boy, Jesus spoke of spiritual

issues in ways that His hearers often did not understand. Serious Christ-followers, however, strive to gain understanding, as did Mary (Luke 2:51) and His disciples (8:9).

■ **2:51** — Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, but He was placed in the care and under the authority of His earthly parents, Mary and Joseph. He submitted to them, not as an inferior, but as an example of obedience to us.

■ **3:4** — John faithfully fulfilled the calling given to him even before his birth, which was announced by the angel Gabriel to his father Zacharias (Luke 1:11–19). Likewise, God created you for a very special purpose. Even before you were

John Preaches to the People

⁷Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, ^a“Brood^l of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Therefore bear fruits ^aworthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as *our* father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. ⁹And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore ^aevery tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰So the people asked him, saying, ^a“What shall we do then?”

¹¹He answered and said to them, ^a“He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, ^blet him do likewise.”

¹²Then ^atax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?”

¹³And he said to them, ^a“Collect no more than what is appointed for you.”

¹⁴Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, “And what shall we do?”

So he said to them, “Do not ^lintimidate anyone ^aor accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.”

¹⁵Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ *or* not, ¹⁶John answered, saying to all, ^a“I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will ^bbaptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

¹⁷His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and ^agather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸And with many other exhortations he preached to the people. ¹⁹^aBut Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his ^lbrother Philip’s wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, ²⁰also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison.

John Baptizes Jesus

²¹When all the people were baptized, ^ait came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. ²²And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am ^awell pleased.”

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

²³Now Jesus Himself began *His ministry* at ^aabout thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) ^bthe son of Joseph, *the son of Heli, ²⁴the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna, the son of Joseph, ²⁵the son of Matathiah, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, ²⁶the son of Maath, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Semei, the son of Joseph, the son of Judah, ²⁷the son of Joannas, the son of Rhesa, the son of ^aZerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, ²⁸the son of*

3:7^a Matt. 3:7; 12:34; 23:33 ^lOffspring 3:8^a [2 Cor. 7:9–11] 3:9^a Matt. 7:19 3:10^a [Acts 2:37, 38; 16:30, 31] 3:11^a 2 Cor. 8:14

^bIs. 58:7 3:12^a Luke 7:29 3:13^a Luke 19:8 3:14^a Ex. 20:16; 23:1 ^lLit. *shake down* for money 3:16^a Matt. 3:11, 12

^bJohn 7:39; 20:22 3:17^a Matt. 13:24–30 3:19^a Mark 6:17 ^lNU *brother’s wife* 3:21^a Matt. 3:13–17

3:22^a 2 Pet. 1:17 3:23^a [Num. 4:3, 35, 39, 43, 47] ^bJohn 6:42 3:27^a Ezra 2:2; 3:8

LIFE LESSONS

born, He had great plans for you as well (Ps. 139:13–16; Eph. 2:10).

■ **3:11**—An intimate relationship with God is about far more than merely enjoying warm feelings toward the Creator of the universe. Any genuine love for the Lord will move a person to perform real acts of love toward others (James 2:15, 16; 1 John 3:16–18). It also stirs people’s hearts toward salvation, commitment, and obedience.

■ **3:14**—John the Baptist did not advise soldiers to go into another profession. He did, however, instruct them to act justly and mercifully with those under their authority.

■ **3:23**—Jesus spent three decades preparing for His ministry, most of it in almost total obscurity. Most of the time, those whom God uses greatly He first puts through a period of preparation outside of the bright lights of fame and notoriety.

Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er, ²⁹the son of Jose, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, ³⁰the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonan, the son of Eliakim, ³¹the son of Melea, the son of Menan, the son of Mattathah, the son of ^aNathan, ^bthe son of David, ^{32a}the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, ³³the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, ³⁴the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, ^athe son of Terah, the son of Nahor, ³⁵the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, ^{36a}the son of Cainan, the son of ^bArphaxad, ^cthe son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, ³⁷the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan, ³⁸the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, ^athe son of God.

Satan Tempts Jesus

4 Then ^aJesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and ^bwas led by the Spirit ¹into the wilderness, ²being ¹tempted for forty days by the devil. And ^ain those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.

³And the devil said to Him, “If You are ^athe Son of God, command this stone to become bread.”

⁴But Jesus answered him, saying, “It is written, ^a“Man shall not live by bread alone, ¹but by every word of God.””

⁵Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. ⁶And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for ^athis has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. ⁷Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.”

⁸And Jesus answered and said to him, ¹“Get behind Me, Satan! ²For it is written, ^a“You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.””

^{9a}Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. ¹⁰For it is written:

“He shall give His angels
charge over you,
To keep you,”

¹¹and,

“In *their* hands they shall bear you up,
Lest you dash your foot
against a stone.””

¹²And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ^a“You shall not ¹tempt the LORD your God.””

¹³Now when the devil had ended every

^{3:31} ^aZech. 12:12 ^b2 Sam. 5:14; 7:12 ^{3:32} ^aRuth 4:18–22 ^{3:34} ^aGen. 11:24, 26–30; 12:3 ^{3:36} ^aGen. 11:12 ^bGen. 10:22, 24; 11:10–13 ^cGen. 5:6–32; 9:27; 11:10 ^{3:38} ^aGen. 5:1, 2 ^{4:1} ^aMatt. 4:1–11 ^bLuke 2:27 ¹NU in ^{4:2} ^aEx. 34:28 ¹tested ^{4:3} ^aJohn 20:31 ^{4:4} ^aDeut. 8:3 ¹NU omits *but by every word of God* ^{4:5} ¹NU *And taking Him up, he showed Him* ^{4:6} ^a[Rev. 13:2, 7] ^{4:8} ^aDeut. 6:13; 10:20 ¹NU omits *Get behind Me, Satan* ²NU, M omit *For* ^{4:9} ^aMatt. 4:5–7 ^{4:10} ^aPs. 91:11 ^{4:11} ^aPs. 91:12 ^{4:12} ^aDeut. 6:16 ¹test

LIFE LESSONS

■ **4:1**—To walk in the Spirit is to obey the initial promptings of the Spirit. This does not mean life will always be easy or problem-free. Sometimes the Lord will lead us into the wilderness or into situations that are difficult. In fact, this often happens after times of great spiritual growth or victory. However, if we trust and obey Him, we will surely triumph, and our relationship with Him will grow even deeper and stronger.

■ **4:13**—Satan does not attack us in the same way at all times. He looks for opportune moments, when we feel weakest or most discouraged, to suggest that God cannot be trusted and we must take matters into our own hands. How do we fend off his lies? By walking daily with the Lord in prayer, studying His Word, and staying strong in our faith (1 Pet. 5:8–11).

TEMPTATION: THE TWO ADAMS CONTRASTED

Both Adam and Christ faced three aspects of temptation. Adam yielded, bringing upon humankind sin and death. Christ resisted, resulting in justification and life.

1 John 2:16	Genesis 3:6 First Adam	Luke 4:1–13 Second Adam— Christ
“the lust of the flesh”	“the tree was good for food”	“command this stone to become bread”
“the lust of the eyes”	“it was pleasant to the eyes”	“the devil . . . showed Him all the kingdoms”
“the pride of life”	“a tree desirable to make one wise”	“throw Yourself down from here”

¹temptation, he departed from Him ^auntil an opportune time.

Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry

^{14a}Then Jesus returned ^bin the power of the Spirit to ^cGalilee, and ^dnews of Him went out through all the surrounding region. ¹⁵And He ^ataught in their synagogues, ^bbeing glorified by all.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

¹⁶So He came to ^aNazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, ^bHe went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ “The^a Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to *the* poor;

He has sent Me ^tto heal
the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to *the* captives
And recovery of sight to *the* blind,
To ^bset at liberty those who
are ²oppressed;

¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable
year of the LORD.”

²⁰Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is ^afulfilled in your hearing.” ²²So all bore witness to Him, and ^amarveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, ^b“Is this not Joseph’s son?”

²³He said to them, “You will surely say this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in ^aCapernaum,¹ do also here in ^bYour country.’” ²⁴Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no ^aprophet is accepted in his own country. ²⁵But I tell you truly, ^amany widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; ²⁶but to none of them was Elijah sent except to ¹Zarephath, *in the region* of Sidon, to a woman *who was* a widow. ^{27a}And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.”

²⁸So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were ^afilled with ¹wrath, ^{29a}and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was

^{4:13}^a [Heb. 4:15] ¹testing ^{4:14}^a Matt. 4:12 ^b John 4:43 ^c Acts 10:37 ^d Matt. 4:24 ^{4:15}^a Matt. 4:23 ^b Is. 52:13 ^{4:16}^a Mark 6:1 ^b Acts 13:14–16; 17:2 ^{4:18}^a Is. 49:8, 9; 61:1, 2 ^b [Dan. 9:24] ¹ NU omits to *heal the brokenhearted* ² *downtrodden* ^{4:21}^a Acts 13:29 ^{4:22}^a [Ps. 45:2] ^b John 6:42 ^{4:23}^a Matt. 4:13; 11:23 ^b Matt. 13:54 ¹ NU *Capharnaum*, here and elsewhere ^{4:24}^a John 4:44 ^{4:25}^a 1 Kin. 17:9 ^{4:26}¹ Gr. *Sarepta* ^{4:27}^a 2 Kin. 5:1–14 ^{4:28}^a Luke 6:11 ¹rage ^{4:29}^a John 8:37; 10:31

LIFE LESSONS

■ **4:21**—Those in the synagogue understood that the text Jesus read (Is. 61) referred to the prophesied Messiah. Therefore, at the outset of

His ministry Jesus announced that He is the Savior and Redeemer that Israel and the world had been awaiting.

built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. ³⁰Then ^apassing through the midst of them, He went His way.

Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit

³¹Then ^aHe went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. ³²And they were ^aastonished at His teaching, ^bfor His word was with authority. ³³^aNow in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? ^aI know who You are—^bthe Holy One of God!"

³⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, ¹"Be quiet, and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him in *their* midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. ³⁶Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, "What a word this *is!* For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out." ³⁷And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed

³⁸^aNow He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was ¹sick with a high fever, and they ^bmade request of Him concerning her. ³⁹So He stood over her and ^arebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.

Many Healed After Sabbath Sunset

⁴⁰^aWhen the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. ⁴¹^aAnd demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, ^b"You are ¹the Christ, the Son of God!"

And He, ^crebuking *them*, did not allow them to ²speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.

Jesus Preaches in Galilee

⁴²^aNow when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; ⁴³but He said to them, "I must ^apreach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent." ⁴⁴^aAnd He was preaching in the synagogues of ¹Galilee.

Four Fishermen Called as Disciples

5 So ^ait was, as the multitude pressed about Him to ^bhear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, ²and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing *their* nets. ³Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He ^asat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

⁴When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, ^a"Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

⁵But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught ^anothing; nevertheless ^bat Your word I will let down the net." ⁶And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. ⁷So they signaled to *their* partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, ^a"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

⁹For he and all who were with him were ^aastonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; ¹⁰and so also *were* James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were

4:30^a John 8:59; 10:39 4:31^a Matt. 4:13 4:32^a Matt. 7:28, 29 ^b[John 6:63; 7:46; 8:26, 28, 38, 47; 12:49, 50] 4:33^a Mark 1:23
 4:34^a Luke 4:41 ^bPs. 16:10 4:35¹ Lit. *Be muzzled* 4:38^a Mark 1:29–31 ^bMark 5:23 ¹afflicted with 4:39^a Luke 8:24
 4:40^a Matt. 8:16, 17 4:41^a Mark 1:34; 3:11 ^bMark 8:29 ^cMark 1:25, 34; 3:11 ¹NU omits *the Christ* ²Or *say that they knew*
 4:42^a Mark 1:35–38 4:43^a [John 9:4] 4:44^a Matt. 4:23; 9:35 ¹NU *Judea* 5:1^a Mark 1:16–20 ^bActs 13:44
 5:3^a John 8:2 5:4^a John 21:6 5:5^a John 21:3 ^bPs. 33:9 5:8^{a1} Kin. 17:18 5:9^a Mark 5:42; 10:24, 26

partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid. ^aFrom now on you will catch men.” ¹¹So when they had brought their boats to land, ^athey ¹forsook all and followed Him.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

^{12^a}And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of ^bleprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on *his* face and ¹implored Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”

¹³Then He put out *His* hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” ^aImmediately the leprosy left him. ^{14^a}And He charged him to tell no one, “But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, ^bjust as Moses commanded.”

¹⁵However, ^athe report went around concerning Him all the more; and ^bgreat multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. ^{16^a}So He Himself *often* withdrew into the wilderness and ^bprayed.

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic

¹⁷Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was *present* ¹to heal them. ^{18^a}Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before

Him. ¹⁹And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with *his* bed through the tiling into the midst ^abefore Jesus.

²⁰When He saw their faith, He said to him, “Man, your sins are forgiven you.”

^{21^a}And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? ^bWho can forgive sins but God alone?”

²²But when Jesus ^aperceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, “Why are you reasoning in your hearts? ²³Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Rise up and walk’? ²⁴But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the man who was paralyzed, ^a“I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

²⁵Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, ^aglorifying God. ²⁶And they were all amazed, and they ^aglorified God and were filled with fear, saying, “We have seen strange things today!”

Matthew the Tax Collector

^{27^a}After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, ^b“Follow Me.” ²⁸So he left all, rose up, and ^afollowed Him.

^{29^a}Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And ^bthere were a great number of tax collectors and others who

^{5:10^a} Matt. 4:19 ^{5:11^a} Matt. 4:20; 19:27 ¹ left behind ^{5:12^a} Mark 1:40–44 ^b Lev. 13:14 ¹ begged ^{5:13^a} John 5:9 ^{5:14^a} Matt. 8:4
^b Lev. 13:1–3; 14:2–32 ^{5:15^a} Mark 1:45 ^b John 6:2 ^{5:16^a} Luke 9:10 ^b Matt. 14:23 ^{5:17¹} NU with Him to heal ^{5:18^a} Mark 2:3–12
^{5:19^a} Matt. 15:30 ^{5:21^a} Mark 2:6, 7 ^b Is. 43:25 ^{5:22^a} John 2:25 ^{5:24^a} Luke 7:14 ^{5:25^a} Acts 3:8 ^{5:26^a} Luke 1:65;
^{7:16} ^{5:27^a} Matt. 9:9–17 ^b John 12:26; 21:19, 22 ^{5:28^a} Mark 10:28 ^{5:29^a} Matt. 9:9, 10 ^b Luke 15:1

LIFE LESSONS

■ **5:11**—The particulars of what Jesus requires of His disciples vary tremendously, but of all followers He demands total allegiance. He must be Lord of all, not merely one significant voice among many others.

■ **5:13**—Jesus did not have to touch people to cure them (Luke 7:1–10), but He made a point of compassionately touching the leper—a man no

one dared to touch. Jesus always gives us exactly what we need.

■ **5:16**—Jesus cherished His times alone in prayer. As our example, He shows us that none of us can afford to skip our devotional times alone with the Lord. We were made for an intimate relationship with Him, and that cannot happen if we never communicate with Him or listen to Him.

sat down with them. ³⁰And their scribes and the Pharisees ²complained against His disciples, saying, ^a“Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”

³¹Jesus answered and said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³²^aI have not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

Jesus Is Questioned About Fasting

³³Then they said to Him, ^a“Why¹ do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?”

³⁴And He said to them, “Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the ^abridegroom is with them? ³⁵But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days.”

³⁶^aThen He spoke a parable to them: “No one ¹puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was *taken* out of the new does not match the old. ³⁷And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. ³⁸But new wine must be put into new wineskins, ¹and both are preserved. ³⁹And no one, having drunk old *wine*, ¹immediately desires new; for he says, “The old is ²better.””

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

6 Now ^ait happened ¹on the second Sabbath after the first that He went

through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate *them*, rubbing *them* in *their* hands. ²And some of the Pharisees said to them, “Why are you doing ^awhat is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?”

³But Jesus answering them said, “Have you not even read this, ^awhat David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: ⁴how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him, ^awhich is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?” ⁵And He said to them, “The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

Healing on the Sabbath

⁶^aNow it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered. ⁷So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would ^aheal on the Sabbath, that they might find an ^baccusation against Him. ⁸But He ^aknew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, “Arise and stand here.” And he arose and stood. ⁹Then Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one thing: ^aIs it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or ¹to destroy?” ¹⁰And when He had looked around at them all, He said to ¹the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored ²as whole as the other. ¹¹But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

5:30 ^aLuke 15:2 ¹NU But the Pharisees and their scribes ²grumbled 5:32 ^a1 Tim. 1:15 5:33 ^aMatt. 9:14 ¹NU omits Why do, making the verse a statement 5:34 ^aJohn 3:29 5:36 ^aMark 2:21, 22 ¹NU tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old one 5:38 ¹NU omits and both are preserved 5:39 ¹NU omits immediately ²NU good 6:1 ^aMatt. 12:1–8 ¹NU on a Sabbath that He went 6:2 ^aEx. 20:10 6:3 ^a1 Sam. 21:6 6:4 ^aLev. 24:9 6:6 ^aMark 3:1–6 6:7 ^aLuke 13:14; 14:1–6 ^bLuke 20:20 6:8 ^aMatt. 9:4 6:9 ^aJohn 7:23 ¹M to kill 6:10 ¹NU, M him ²NU omits as whole as the other

LIFE LESSONS

■ **6:9**—Every law or commandment that God ever gave to His people, He gave for their own good (Deut. 10:13). The Lord takes no pleasure in regulations that destroy, injure, or allow injustice to remain—so the answer to Jesus’ question

should have been obvious. Sadly, these religious leaders had added so many stipulations to His commands that they prevented people from practicing the spirit of the Law—loving God and serving others (Matt. 23:13–28).

The Twelve Apostles

¹²Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in ^aprayer to God. ¹³And when it was day, He called His disciples to *Himself*; ^aand from them He chose ^btwelve whom He also named apostles: ¹⁴Simon, ^awhom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; ¹⁵Matthew and Thomas; James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; ¹⁶Judas ^athe son of James, and ^bJudas Iscariot who also became a traitor.

Jesus Heals a Great Multitude

¹⁷And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples ^aand a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, ¹⁸as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. ¹⁹And the whole multitude ^asought to ^btouch Him, for ^cpower went out from Him and healed *them* all.

The Beatitudes

²⁰Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said:

- ^a“Blessed *are you* poor,
For yours is the kingdom of God.
²¹^aBlessed *are you* who hunger now,
For you shall be ^bfilled.¹
^cBlessed *are you* who weep now,
For you shall ^alaugh.
²²^aBlessed are you when men hate you,
And when they ^bexclude you,

And revile *you*, and cast
out your name as evil,
For the Son of Man’s sake.

- ²³^aRejoice in that day and leap for joy!
For indeed your reward
is great in heaven,
For ^bin like manner their
fathers did to the prophets.

Jesus Pronounces Woes

- ²⁴^aBut ^awoe to you ^bwho are rich,
For ^cyou have received
your consolation.
²⁵^aWoe to you who are full,
For you shall hunger.
^bWoe to you who laugh now,
For you shall mourn and ^cweep.
²⁶^aWoe ¹to you when ²all men
speak well of you,
For so did their fathers to
the false prophets.

Love Your Enemies

²⁷^a“But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸^abless those who curse you, and ^bpray for those who spitefully use you. ²⁹^aTo him who strikes you on the *one* cheek, offer the other also. ^bAnd from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold *your* tunic either. ³⁰^aGive to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask *them* back. ³¹^aAnd just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

³²^a“But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴^aAnd if you lend

6:12^a Mark 1:35 6:13^a John 6:70 ^b Matt. 10:1 6:14^a John 1:42 6:16^a Jude 1 ^b Luke 22:3–6 6:17^a Mark 3:7, 8 6:19^a Matt. 9:21; 14:36 ^b Mark 5:27, 28 ^c Luke 8:46 6:20^a Matt. 5:3–12; [11:5] 6:21^a Is. 55:1; 65:13 ^b [Rev. 7:16] ^c [Is. 61:3] ^d Ps. 126:5 ¹ *satisfied* 6:22^a 1 Pet. 2:19; 3:14; 4:14 ^b [John 16:2] 6:23^a James 1:2 ^b Acts 7:51 6:24^a James 5:1–6 ^b Luke 12:21 ^c Luke 16:25 6:25^a [Is. 65:13] ^b [Prov. 14:13] ^c James 4:9 6:26^a [John 15:19] ¹ NU, M omit to you ² M omits all 6:27^a Rom. 12:20 6:28^a Rom. 12:14 ^b Acts 7:60 6:29^a Matt. 5:39–42 ^b [1 Cor. 6:7] 6:30^a Deut. 15:7, 8 6:31^a Matt. 7:12 6:32^a Matt. 5:46 6:34^a Matt. 5:42

LIFE LESSONS

■ **6:12**—Jesus spent all night in prayer immediately before He chose the twelve disciples who would accompany Him everywhere. Whenever

we make any decision—major or minor—we should follow His example and wholeheartedly seek His counsel.

to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. ³⁵But ^alove your enemies, ^bdo good, and ^clend, ^dhoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and ^eyou will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. ³⁶^aTherefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Do Not Judge

³⁷^a“Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. ^bForgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸^aGive, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your ^bbosom. For ^cwith the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

³⁹And He spoke a parable to them: ^a“Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? ⁴⁰^aA disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. ⁴¹^aAnd why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? ⁴²Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see

the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye.

A Tree Is Known by Its Fruit

⁴³^a“For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. ⁴⁴For ^aevery tree is known by its own fruit. For *men* do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. ⁴⁵^aA good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil ¹treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out ^bof the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Build on the Rock

⁴⁶^a“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say? ⁴⁷^aWhoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: ⁴⁸He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was ¹founded on the rock. ⁴⁹But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth

6:35 ^a[Rom. 13:10] ^bHeb. 13:16 ^cPs. 37:26 ^dMatt. 5:46 ^eexpecting 6:36 ^aMatt. 5:48 6:37 ^aMatt. 7:1–5 ^bMatt. 18:21–35
6:38 ^a[Prov. 19:17; 28:27] ^bPs. 79:12 ^cJames 2:13 6:39 ^aMatt. 15:14; 23:16 6:40 ^a[John 13:16; 15:20] 6:41 ^aMatt. 7:3
6:43 ^aMatt. 7:16–18, 20 6:44 ^aMatt. 12:33 6:45 ^aMatt. 12:35 ^bMatt. 12:34 ¹NU omits *treasure*
of his heart 6:46 ^aMal. 1:6 6:47 ^aJames 1:22–25 6:48 ¹NU well built

LIFE LESSONS

■ **6:35** — If God were not kind to the unappreciative and ungodly, where would any of us be (Rom. 5:8)? The Lord will always judge sin, but He desires that we would turn from our sin and receive His salvation so that He can bless us, not judge us (1 Pet. 3:9). Likewise, we must be kind to all people — showing them God’s love and mercy — in the hope that they will repent and be saved (2 Tim. 2:24–26).

■ **6:44** — What kind of fruit do you bear? How would your family, coworkers, and neighbors describe you? Would they say you are loving or selfish? Godly or unscrupulous? The way to measure the effectiveness of your walk with the Lord is to

see what is being produced. Are people being drawn to God through you, or are they turned off to Him because of your ways? You can only make a difference in this world for Christ if you abide in Him (John 15:5).

■ **6:45** — Your speech says a lot about you. Is your conversation tainted by complaining and cursing? Or is it characterized by praise for the Lord and sound wisdom? This shows what is stored in your heart, and if it is negative, you should reevaluate what you’ve been focusing on. Set your heart on God because then good, helpful speech will flow from you.

without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it ¹fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”

Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant

7 Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He ^aentered Capernaum. ²And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. ³So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. ⁴And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, ⁵“for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.”

⁶Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, “Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. ⁷Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But ^asay the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁸For I also am a man placed under ^aauthority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

⁹When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, “I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!” ¹⁰And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well ¹who had been sick.

Jesus Raises the Son of the Widow of Nain

¹¹Now it happened, the day after, *that* He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. ¹²And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. ¹³When the Lord saw her, He had ^acompassion on her and said to her, ^b“Do not weep.” ¹⁴Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried *him* stood still. And He said, “Young man, I say to you, ^aarise.” ¹⁵So he who was dead ^asat up and began to speak. And He ^bpresented him to his mother.

¹⁶^aThen fear ¹came upon all, and they ^bglorified God, saying, ^c“A great prophet has risen up among us”; and, ^d“God has visited His people.” ¹⁷And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

John the Baptist Sends Messengers to Jesus

¹⁸^aThen the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. ¹⁹And John, calling two of his disciples to *him*, sent *them* to ¹Jesus, saying, “Are You ^athe Coming One, or ²do we look for another?”

²⁰When the men had come to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’” ²¹And that very hour He cured many of ¹infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

²²^aJesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have

6:49¹ NU collapsed 7:1^a Matt. 8:5–13 7:7^a Ps. 33:9; 107:20 7:8^a [Mark 13:34] 7:10¹ NU omits *who had been sick* 7:13^a John 11:35 ^bLuke 8:52 7:14^a Acts 9:40 7:15^a John 11:44 ^{b2} Kin. 4:36 7:16^a Luke 1:65 ^bLuke 5:26 ^cLuke 24:19 ^dLuke 1:68 ¹seized them all 7:18^a Matt. 11:2–19 7:19^a [Zech. 9:9] ¹NU the Lord ²should we expect 7:21¹ illnesses 7:22^a Matt. 11:4

LIFE LESSONS

■ **7:15**—This was not the only time Jesus raised a dead person back to life. He who is called the “Word of life” (1 John 1:1) is “Lord of both the dead and the living” (Rom. 14:9).

■ **7:21**—In prison, John had begun to doubt

whether Jesus was the promised Messiah. In His grace, the Lord showed the discouraged John the truth. In the number and variety of His miracles, Jesus was doing what no Old Testament prophet had ever done.

seen and heard: ^bthat *the* blind ^csee, *the* lame ^dwalk, *the* lepers are ^ecleansed, *the* deaf ^fhear, *the* dead are raised, ^g*the* poor have the gospel preached to them. ²³And blessed is *he* who is not ¹offended because of Me.”

^{24a}When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings’ courts. ²⁶But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is *he* of whom it is written:

“Behold, I send My messenger
before Your face,
Who will prepare Your
way before You.’

²⁸For I say to you, among those born of women there is ¹not a ^agreater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

²⁹And when all the people heard *Him*, even the tax collectors ¹justified God, ^a“having been baptized with the baptism of John. ³⁰But the Pharisees and ¹lawyers rejected ^athe will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.

³¹And the Lord said, ^a“To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? ³²They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying:

‘We played the flute for you,
And you did not dance;

We mourned to you,
And you did not weep.’

³³For ^aJohn the Baptist came ^bneither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ ³⁴The Son of Man has come ^aeating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a ¹winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ ^{35a}But wisdom is justified by all her children.”

A Sinful Woman Forgiven

^{36a}Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to eat. ³⁷And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, ³⁸and stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped *them* with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed *them* with the fragrant oil. ³⁹Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *this*, he spoke to himself, saying, ^a“This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman *this* is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.”

⁴⁰And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” So he said, “Teacher, say it.”

⁴¹“There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred ^adenarii, and the other fifty. ⁴²And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?”

⁴³Simon answered and said, “I suppose the *one* whom he forgave more.”

And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.” ⁴⁴Then He turned to the woman

^{7:22}^bIs. 35:5 ^cJohn 9:7 ^dMatt. 15:31 ^eLuke 17:12–14 ^fMark 7:37 ^g[Is. 61:1–3] ^{7:23}¹caused to stumble ^{7:24}^aMatt. 11:7 ^{7:27}^aMal. 3:1 ^{7:28}^a[Luke 1:15] ¹NU none greater than John; ^{7:29}^aLuke 3:12 ¹declared the righteousness of ^{7:30}^aActs 20:27 ¹the experts in the law ^{7:31}^aMatt. 11:16 ¹NU, M omit And the Lord said ^{7:33}^aMatt. 3:1 ^bLuke 1:15 ^{7:34}^aLuke 15:2 ¹An excessive drinker ^{7:35}^aMatt. 11:19 ^{7:36}^aJohn 11:2 ^{7:39}^aLuke 15:2 ^{7:41}^aMatt. 18:28

LIFE LESSONS

■ **7:30**—It is possible to reject the Lord’s will and even work against it. This will never happen accidentally, however, or take place despite your

desires. If you want to know God’s will for your life, He will move heaven and earth to show it to you. But you have to choose it and obey Him.

and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no ^awater for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped *them* with the hair of her head. ⁴⁵You gave Me no ^akiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. ^{46a}You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. ^{47a}Therefore I say to you, her sins, which *are* many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loves little.”

⁴⁸Then He said to her, ^a“Your sins are forgiven.”

⁴⁹And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, ^a“Who is this who even forgives sins?”

⁵⁰Then He said to the woman, ^a“Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

Many Women Minister to Jesus

8 Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and ^bbringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve *were* with Him, ²and ^acertain women who had been healed of evil spirits and ¹infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, ^bout of whom had come seven demons, ³and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for ¹Him from their ²substance.

The Parable of the Sower

^{4a}And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: ⁵“A sower went out to sow his seed. And

as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. ⁶Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. ⁷And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. ⁸But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded ^{1a}a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, ^a“He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

The Purpose of Parables

^{9a}Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?”

¹⁰And He said, “To you it has been given to know the ¹mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is given* in parables, that

“Seeing they may not see,
And hearing they may
not understand.”

The Parable of the Sower Explained

^{11a}“Now the parable is this: The seed is the ^bword of God. ¹²Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. ¹³But the ones on the rock *are those* who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of ¹temptation fall away. ¹⁴Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, ^ariches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. ¹⁵But the

7:44^a Gen. 18:4; 19:2; 43:24 7:45^a Rom. 16:16 7:46^a Ps. 23:5 7:47^a [1 Tim. 1:14] 7:48^a Matt. 9:2 7:49^a Luke 5:21
7:50^a Matt. 9:22 8:1¹ *proclaiming the good news* 8:2^a Matt. 27:55 ^b Mark 16:9 ¹ *sicknesses* 8:3¹ NU, M *them*
² *possessions* 8:4^a Mark 4:1–9 8:8^a Luke 14:35 ¹ *Lit. fruit* 8:9^a Matt. 13:10–23 8:10^a Is. 6:9 ¹ *secret or*
hidden truths 8:11^a [1 Pet. 1:23] ^b Luke 5:1; 11:28 8:13¹ *testing*

LIFE LESSONS

■ **7:47**—If we refuse to see the magnitude of our sin, the Lord’s sacrifice may not seem significant to us. But when we understand the true condition of our sinful hearts and the terrible penalty of our transgressions, His immense sacrifice for us inspires deep love and devotion (Rom. 3:10–26; 6:23).

■ **8:2, 3**—Luke came from a culture that largely dismissed or at least downplayed the importance of women, yet he often highlights the contributions of women in the ministry of Jesus. He thus anticipates the message of Galatians 3:28, “You are all one in Christ Jesus.”

ones *that* fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep *it* and bear fruit with ^apatience.¹

The Parable of the Revealed Light

^{16a}“No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts *it* under a bed, but sets *it* on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the ^blight. ^{17a}For nothing is secret that will not be ^brevealed, nor *anything* hidden that will not be known and come to light. ¹⁸Therefore take heed how you hear. ^aFor whoever has, to him *more* will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he ¹seems to ^bhave will be taken from him.”

Jesus' Mother and Brothers Come to Him

^{19a}Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. ²⁰And it was told Him *by some*, who said, “Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You.”

²¹But He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.”

Wind and Wave Obey Jesus

^{22a}Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side of the lake.” And they launched out. ²³But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling *with water*, and were in ¹jeopardy. ²⁴And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!”

Then He arose and rebuked the wind

and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵But He said to them, ^a“Where is your faith?”

And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, ^b“Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!”

A Demon-Possessed Man Healed

^{26a}Then they sailed to the country of the ¹Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons ¹for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs. ²⁸When he saw Jesus, he ^acried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, ^b“What have I to do with ^cYou, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!” ²⁹For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

³⁰Jesus asked him, saying, “What is your name?”

And he said, “Legion,” because many demons had entered him. ³¹And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out ^ainto the abyss.

³²Now a herd of many ^aswine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. ³³Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.

³⁴When those who fed *them* saw what had happened, they fled and told *it* in

8:14 ^{a1} Tim. 6:9, 10 8:15 ^a [Heb. 10:36–39] ¹ endurance 8:16 ^a Luke 11:33 ^b Matt. 5:14 8:17 ^a Luke 12:2 ^b [2 Cor. 5:10]
8:18 ^a Matt. 25:29 ^b Matt. 13:12 ¹ thinks that he has 8:19 ^a Mark 3:31–35 8:22 ^a Matt. 8:23–27 8:23 ¹ danger
8:25 ^a Luke 9:41 ^b Luke 4:36; 5:26 8:26 ^a Mark 5:1–17 ¹ NU Gerasenes 8:27 ¹ NU and for a long time wore
no clothes 8:28 ^a Mark 1:26; 9:26 ^b Mark 1:23, 24 ^c Luke 4:41 8:31 ^a [Rev. 20:1, 3] 8:32 ^a Lev. 11:7

LIFE LESSONS

■ **8:16**—When you accept the Light of the World, Jesus Christ (John 8:12), as your Lord and Savior, you cannot hide that you know Him. Rather, you

must allow His light to shine through you so that others can also have His light—so they also can accept the salvation He offers.

the city and in the country. ³⁵Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, ^asitting at the ^bfeet of Jesus, clothed and in his ^cright mind. And they were afraid. ³⁶They also who had seen *it* told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was ¹healed. ^{37^a}Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the ¹Gadarenes ^basked Him to ^cdepart from them, for they were seized with great ^dfear. And He got into the boat and returned.

³⁸Now ^athe man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹“Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you.” And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed

⁴⁰So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. ^{41^a}And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus’ feet and begged Him to come to his house, ^{42^f}for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she ^awas dying.

But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. ^{43^a}Now a woman, having a ^bflow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, ^{44^c}came from behind and ^a“touched the border of

His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.

⁴⁵And Jesus said, “Who touched Me?”

When all denied it, Peter ¹and those with him said, “Master, the multitudes throng and press You, ²and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’”

⁴⁶But Jesus said, “Somebody touched Me, for I perceived ^apower going out from Me.” ⁴⁷Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.

⁴⁸And He said to her, “Daughter, ¹be of good cheer; ^ayour faith has made you well. ^bGo in peace.”

^{49^a}While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue’s *house*, saying to him, “Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the ¹Teacher.”

⁵⁰But when Jesus heard *it*, He answered him, saying, “Do not be afraid; ^aonly believe, and she will be made well.” ⁵¹When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go ¹in except ²Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. ⁵²Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, ^a“Do not weep; she is not dead, ^bbut sleeping.” ⁵³And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead.

⁵⁴But He ¹put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, “Little girl, ^aarise.” ⁵⁵Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given *something* to eat. ⁵⁶And her parents were astonished, but ^aHe charged them to tell no one what had happened.

8:35^a [Matt. 11:28] ^bLuke 10:39; 17:16 ^c[2 Tim. 1:7] 8:36¹ *delivered* 8:37^a Matt. 8:34 ^bLuke 4:34 ^cActs 16:39 ^dLuke 5:26 ¹NU Gerasenes 8:38^a Mark 5:18–20 8:41^a Mark 5:22–43 8:42^a Luke 7:2 8:43^a Matt. 9:20 ^bLuke 15:19–22 8:44^a Mark 6:56 8:45¹ NU omits *and those with him* ²NU omits the rest of v. 45. 8:46^a Mark 5:30 8:48^a Luke 7:50 ^bJohn 8:11 ¹NU omits *be of good cheer* 8:49^a Mark 5:35 ¹NU adds *anymore* 8:50^a [Mark 11:22–24] 8:51¹ NU adds *with Him* ²NU, M Peter, John, and James 8:52^a Luke 7:13 ^b[John 11:11, 13] 8:54^a John 11:43 ¹NU omits *put them all outside* 8:56^a Matt. 8:4; 9:30

LIFE LESSONS

■ **8:53**—As a physician, Luke wanted his audience to know that the child Jesus healed was really and truly dead. One day, Jesus will destroy

death altogether (1 Cor. 15:21), but in this passage, He clearly showed His mastery over it.

Sending Out the Twelve

9 Then ^aHe called His twelve disciples together and ^bgave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. ^{2a}He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ^{3a}And He said to them, “Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece.

^{4a}“Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. ^{5a}And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, ^bshake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them.”

^{6a}So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

Herod Seeks to See Jesus

^{7a}Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him; and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead, ⁸and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the old prophets had risen again. ⁹Herod said, “John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?” ^aSo he sought to see Him.

Feeding the Five Thousand

^{10a}And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. ^bThen He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. ¹¹But when the multitudes knew *it*, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them

about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing. ^{12a}When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, “Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here.”

¹³But He said to them, “You give them something to eat.”

And they said, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people.” ¹⁴For there were about five thousand men.

Then He said to His disciples, “Make them sit down in groups of fifty.” ¹⁵And they did so, and made them all sit down.

¹⁶Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He ^ablessed and broke them, and gave *them* to the disciples to set before the multitude. ¹⁷So they all ate and were ¹filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

^{18a}And it happened, as He was alone praying, *that* His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, “Who do the crowds say that I am?”

¹⁹So they answered and said, ^a“John the Baptist, but some *say* Elijah; and others *say* that one of the old prophets has risen again.”

²⁰He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

^aPeter answered and said, “The Christ of God.”

9:1^a Matt. 10:1, 2 ^b[John 14:12] 9:2^a Matt. 10:7, 8 9:3^a Luke 10:4–12; 22:35 9:4^a Mark 6:10 9:5^a Matt. 10:14 ^b Acts 13:51
9:6^a Mark 6:12 9:7^a Matt. 14:1, 2 9:9^a Luke 23:8 9:10^a Mark 6:30 ^b Matt. 14:13 9:12^a John 6:1, 5 9:16^a Luke 22:19;
24:30 9:17¹ *satisfied* 9:18^a Matt. 16:13–16 9:19^a Matt. 14:2 9:20^a John 6:68, 69

LIFE LESSONS

■ **9:13**—The Lord will never command us to do something without also providing whatever is required to obey Him. In this case, feeding five thousand men seemed absolutely impossible, but He provided what they needed, and there were even leftovers.

■ **9:20**—Ultimately, this is the question we must all answer and the foundation of our confession of faith (Rom. 10:9, 10). To say that Jesus is the

Christ means we believe that He is God incarnate, born of a virgin, crucified unto death, buried, resurrected on the third day, and fully capable of forgiving our sins and reconciling us to Himself. We trust that all He taught is true, we have eternal life because of Him, and all He has promised and that has been prophesied about Him will be fulfilled. Is this what you believe? Do you have faith that Jesus is the Savior? Who do you say He is?

Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection

^{21a}And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, ²²saying, ^a“The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”

Take Up the Cross and Follow Him

^{23a}Then He said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross ¹daily, and follow Me. ^{24a}For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. ^{25a}For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? ^{26a}For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ^bashamed when He comes in His *own* glory, and *in His* Father’s, and of the holy angels. ^{27a}But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God.”

Jesus Transfigured on the Mount

^{28a}Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe *became* white and glistening. ³⁰And behold, two men talked with Him, who were ^aMoses and ^bElijah, ³¹who appeared in glory and spoke of His ¹decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³²But Peter and those with him ^awere heavy with sleep; and when

they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. ³³Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, *that* Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three ¹tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said.

³⁴While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the ^acloud. ³⁵And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ^a“This is ¹My beloved Son. ^bHear Him!” ³⁶When the voice had ceased, Jesus was found alone. ^aBut they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.

A Boy Is Healed

^{37a}Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, that a great multitude met Him. ³⁸Suddenly a man from the multitude cried out, saying, “Teacher, I implore You, look on my son, for he is my only child. ³⁹And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams *at the mouth*; and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him. ⁴⁰So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.”

⁴¹Then Jesus answered and said, “O ¹faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and ²bear with you? Bring your son here.” ⁴²And as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed *him*. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father.

9:21^a Matt. 8:4; 16:20 9:22^a Matt. 16:21; 17:22 9:23^a Matt. 10:38; 16:24 ¹M omits *daily* 9:24^a [John 12:25] 9:25^a Mark 8:36
9:26^a [Rom. 1:16] ^b Matt. 10:33 9:27^a Matt. 16:28 9:28^a Mark 9:2–8 9:30^a Heb. 11:23–29 ^b 2 Kin. 2:1–11 9:31¹ Death,
lit. *departure* 9:32^a Dan. 8:18; 10:9 9:33¹ *tents* 9:34^a Ex. 13:21 9:35^a [Matt. 3:17; 12:18] ^b Acts 3:22 ¹NU *My Son*,
the Chosen One 9:36^a Matt. 17:9 9:37^a Mark 9:14–27 9:41¹ *unbelieving* ² *put up with*

LIFE LESSONS

■ **9:29, 30**—Peter, James, and John knew Jesus as a great teacher and son of a carpenter from Nazareth, but here they saw Him as they never dreamed they would—as the glorified Messiah. Also, Elijah and Moses were talking to

Him—Moses the greatest of the lawgivers, and Elijah the greatest of the Old Testament prophets. So Jesus was also revealing Himself to be the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets (Matt. 5:17, 18; Luke 24:44–47).

Jesus Again Predicts His Death

⁴³And they were all amazed at the majesty of God.

But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples, ^{44a}“Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men.” ^{45a}But they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.

Who Is the Greatest?

^{46a}Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. ⁴⁷And Jesus, ^aperceiving the thought of their heart, took a ^blittle child and set him by Him, ⁴⁸and said to them, ^a“Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and ^bwhoever receives Me ^creceives Him who sent Me. ^dFor he who is least among you all will be great.”

Jesus Forbids Sectarianism

^{49a}Now John answered and said, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us.”

⁵⁰But Jesus said to him, “Do not forbid *him*, for ^ahe who is not against ¹us is on ²our side.”

A Samaritan Village Rejects the Savior

⁵¹Now it came to pass, when the time had come for ^aHim to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to

Jerusalem, ⁵²and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. ⁵³But ^athey did not receive Him, because His face was *set* for the journey to Jerusalem. ⁵⁴And when His disciples ^aJames and John saw *this*, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, ¹just as ^bElijah did?”

⁵⁵But He turned and rebuked them, ¹and said, “You do not know what manner of ^aspirit you are of. ⁵⁶¹For ^athe Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save *them*.” And they went to another village.

The Cost of Discipleship

^{57a}Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, *that* someone said to Him, “Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.”

⁵⁸And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man ^ahas nowhere to lay *His* head.”

^{59a}Then He said to another, “Follow Me.”

But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

⁶⁰Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.”

⁶¹And another also said, “Lord, ^aI will follow You, but let me first go *and* bid them farewell who are at my house.”

⁶²But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is ^afit for the kingdom of God.”

9:44^a Matt. 17:22 9:45^a Mark 9:32 9:46^a Matt. 18:1–5 9:47^a Matt. 9:4 ^bLuke 18:17 9:48^a Matt. 18:5 ^bJohn 12:44 ^cJohn 13:20
^dEph. 3:8 9:49^a Mark 9:38–40 9:50^a Luke 11:23 ¹NU you ²NU your 9:51^a Mark 16:19 9:53^a John 4:4, 9
 9:54^a Mark 3:17 ^b2 Kin. 1:10, 12 ¹NU omits *just as Elijah did* 9:55^a [2 Tim. 1:7] ¹NU omits the rest of v. 55.
 9:56^a John 3:17; 12:47 ¹NU omits *For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them*.
 9:57^a Matt. 8:19–22 9:58^a Luke 2:7; 8:23 9:59^a Matt. 8:21, 22 9:61^a 1 Kin. 19:20 9:62^a 2 Tim. 4:10

LIFE LESSONS

■ **9:43** — The majesty and greatness of God is displayed in many ways. In this case, it was demonstrated in His irresistible power over an unclean spirit. We should always remember, “His kingdom rules over all” (Ps. 103:19), and He is certainly able to help us, no matter what challenge we face.

■ **9:55** — The disciples still did not understand who they really were in Christ. Sometimes we do not act like the new men and women He is transforming us into either. Yet we are new creations all the same, and we must do our best to represent Him with love and mercy so that others will believe and be saved (2 Cor. 5:17–21; 2 Tim. 2:24–26).

The Seventy Sent Out

10 After these things the Lord appointed ¹seventy others also, and ^asent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. ²Then He said to them, ^a“The harvest truly *is* great, but the laborers *are* few; therefore ^bpray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. ³Go your way; ^abehold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. ⁴Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and ^bgreet no one along the road. ⁵But whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ ⁶And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. ⁷And remain in the same house, ^beating and drinking such things as they give, for ^cthe laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. ⁸Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. ⁹And heal the sick there, and say to them, ^b“The kingdom of God has come near to you.” ¹⁰But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹“The very dust of your city which clings to ¹us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.” ¹²But I say to you that ^ait will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.

Woe to the Impenitent Cities

¹³“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! ^bFor if the mighty works

which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. ¹⁵And you, Capernaum, ¹who are ^bexalted to heaven, ^cwill be brought down to Hades. ¹⁶He who hears you hears Me, ^bhe who rejects you rejects Me, and ^che who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.”

The Seventy Return with Joy

¹⁷Then ^athe ¹seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.”

¹⁸And He said to them, ^a“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹Behold, ^aI give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. ²⁰Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but ¹rather rejoice because ^ayour names are written in heaven.”

Jesus Rejoices in the Spirit

²¹In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. ²²All ¹things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and ^bno one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*.”

10:1^a Mark 6:7 ¹NU seventy-two others 10:2^a John 4:35 ^b2 Thess. 3:1 10:3^a Matt. 10:16 10:4^a Luke 9:3–5 ^b2 Kin. 4:29 10:5^a Matt. 10:12 10:7^a Matt. 10:11 ^b1 Cor. 10:27 ^c1 Tim. 5:18 10:9^a Mark 3:15 ^bMatt. 3:2; 10:7 10:11^a Acts 13:51 ¹NU our feet 10:12^a Matt. 10:15; 11:24 ¹NU, M omit But 10:13^a Matt. 11:21–23 ^bEzek. 3:6 10:15^a Matt. 11:23 ^bIs. 14:13–15 ^cEzek. 26:20 ¹NU will you be exalted to heaven? You will be thrust down to Hades! 10:16^a John 13:20 ^b1 Thess. 4:8 ^cJohn 5:23 10:17^a Luke 10:1 ¹NU seventy-two 10:18^a John 12:31 10:19^a Mark 16:18 10:20^a Is. 4:3 ¹NU, M omit rather 10:21^a Matt. 11:25–27 10:22^a John 3:35; 5:27; 17:2 ^b[John 1:18; 6:44, 46] ¹M And turning to the disciples He said, “All

LIFE LESSONS

■ **10:2**—The Lord invites us to partner with Him in expanding His kingdom. Even though He is the One who draws people to Himself and redeems them, He still leaves the proclamation of the message to us.

■ **10:20**—We tend to get excited about miracles

like curing cancer and casting out demons, but the Lord teaches us that our greatest cause for rejoicing should be our salvation. Evangelism is therefore a more important work than we may imagine (John 14:12).

²³Then He turned to *His* disciples and said privately, *“Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; ²⁴for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it.”*

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

²⁵And behold, a certain ¹lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, *“Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”*

²⁶He said to him, *“What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?”*

²⁷So he answered and said, *“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and ^byour neighbor as yourself.”*

²⁸And He said to him, *“You have answered rightly; do this and ^ayou will live.”*

²⁹But he, wanting to *justify himself*, said to Jesus, *“And who is my neighbor?”*

³⁰Then Jesus answered and said: *“A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among ¹thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, ^ahe passed by on the other side. ³²Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. ³³But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had ^bcompassion. ³⁴So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil*

and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵On the next day, ¹when he departed, he took out two ^adenarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, *“Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.”* ³⁶So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?”

³⁷And he said, *“He who showed mercy on him.”*

Then Jesus said to him, *“Go and do likewise.”*

Mary and Martha Worship and Serve

³⁸Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named ^aMartha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹And she had a sister called Mary, ^awho also ^bsat at ¹Jesus’ feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, *“Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.”*

⁴¹And ¹Jesus answered and said to her, *“Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. ⁴²But ^aone thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”*

The Model Prayer

11 Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”*

^{10:23} ^aMatt. 13:16, 17 ^{10:24} ^{a1} Pet. 1:10, 11 ^{10:25} ^aMatt. 19:16–19; 22:35 ¹expert in the law ^{10:27} ^aDeut. 6:5 ^bLev. 19:18
^{10:28} ^aEzek. 20:11, 13, 21 ^{10:29} ^aLuke 16:15 ^{10:30} ¹robbers ^{10:31} ^aPs. 38:11 ^{10:33} ^aJohn 4:9 ^bLuke 15:20
^{10:35} ^aMatt. 20:2 ¹NU omits *when he departed* ^{10:37} ^aProv. 14:21 ^{10:38} ^aJohn 11:1; 12:2, 3
^{10:39} ^a[1 Cor. 7:32–40] ^bActs 22:3 ¹NU the Lord’s ^{10:41} ¹NU the Lord ^{10:42} ^a[Ps. 27:4]

LIFE LESSONS

- **10:42** — God created us to enjoy a deep and intimate relationship with Himself. While works of service are important, they must never eclipse the fellowship He wants to experience with each of us.
- **11:1** — The disciples often saw Jesus off by Himself in prayer. Seeing the power, wisdom, and joy

in His life, they asked Him to teach them to pray as He did. They wanted to connect with God in an intimate relationship and experience His awesome presence. Are our lives characterized by our time before the throne of grace? Do we inspire others to communicate with and listen to the Lord?

²So He said to them, “When you pray, say:

^aOur¹ Father ²in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.

³Your will be done
On earth as *it is* in heaven.

³ Give us day by day our daily bread.

⁴ And ^aforgive us our sins,
For we also forgive everyone
who is indebted to us.

And do not lead us into temptation,

¹But deliver us from the evil one.”

A Friend Comes at Midnight

⁵And He said to them, “Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; ⁷and he will answer from within and say, ‘Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you’? ⁸I say to you, ^athough he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

Keep Asking, Seeking, Knocking

⁹“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; ^bseek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹^aIf a son asks for ¹bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he asks* for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? ¹²Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³If you then, being evil, know how to give ^agood gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

A House Divided Cannot Stand

¹⁴^aAnd He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. ¹⁵But some of them said, “He casts out demons by ¹Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.”

¹⁶Others, testing *Him*, ^asought from Him a sign from heaven. ¹⁷^aBut ^bHe, knowing their thoughts, said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house *divided* against a house falls. ¹⁸If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁰But if I cast out demons ^awith the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²¹^aWhen a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. ²²But ^awhen a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his ¹spoils. ²³^aHe who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

An Unclean Spirit Returns

²⁴^a“When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ ²⁵And when he comes, he finds *it* swept and put in order. ²⁶Then he goes and takes with *him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and ^athe last *state* of that man is worse than the first.”

Keeping the Word

²⁷And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him,

11:2^a Matt. 6:9–13 ¹NU omits *Our* ²NU omits *in heaven* ³NU omits the rest of v. 2. 11:4^a [Eph. 4:32] ¹NU omits *But deliver us from the evil one* 11:8^a [Luke 18:1–5] 11:9^a [John 15:7] ^bIs. 55:6 11:11^a Matt. 7:9 ¹NU omits *bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for* 11:13^a James 1:17 11:14^a Matt. 9:32–34; 12:22, 24 11:15^a Matt. 9:34; 12:24

¹NU, M *Beelzebub* 11:16^a Matt. 12:38; 16:1 11:17^a Matt. 12:25–29 ^bJohn 2:25 11:20^a Ex. 8:19 11:21^a Mark 3:27

11:22^a [Is. 53:12] ¹plunder 11:23^a Matt. 12:30 11:24^a Matt. 12:43–45 11:26^a [2 Pet. 2:20]

“Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!”

²⁸But He said, *“More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”*

Seeking a Sign

^{29a}And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, *“This is an evil generation. It seeks a ^bsign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah ¹the prophet. ³⁰For as ^aJonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. ^{31a}The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a ^bgreater than Solomon is here. ³²The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for ^athey repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.*

The Lamp of the Body

^{33a}“No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret place or under a ^bbasin, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light. ^{34a}The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is ¹good, your whole body also is full of light. But when *your eye* is ²bad, your body also is full of darkness. ³⁵Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness. ³⁶If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, *the whole body* will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light.”

Woe to the Pharisees and Lawyers

³⁷And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He

THE UNNOTICED WHOM LUKE NOTICES

In Jesus' day, the Samaritans were despised by orthodox Jews because most of the Jews from that region had intermarried with foreigners. The irony of the parable of the Good Samaritan is that a scorned Samaritan knows how to show love to his neighbor, whereas a priest and Levite, who had intimate knowledge of God's law, do not. The Book of Luke highlights Jesus' love for a variety of groups who were not esteemed in His day.

Women:	
Elizabeth	1:5–25, 39–45, 57–66
Mary	1:26–56; 2:1–20, 41–52
Anna	2:36–38
The widow of Nain	7:11–15
The sinner who anoints Jesus' feet	7:36–50
Women disciples	8:1–3
The woman searching for her lost coin	15:8–10
The persistent widow petitioning the unjust judge	18:1–8
The sorrowful women along the way to the cross	23:27
The women who discover the empty tomb	24:1–10
Social Outcasts:	
Gentiles	2:32; 24:47
Shepherds	2:8–20
The poor	6:20–23
The Samaritans	10:30–36; 17:16
Tax collectors and sinners	15:1
Lepers	17:11–19

went in and sat down to eat. ^{38a}When the Pharisee saw *it*, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner.

^{39a}Then the Lord said to him, *“Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but ^byour inward part is full of ¹greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰Foolish ones! Did not ^aHe who made the outside*

11:27^a Luke 1:28, 48 11:28^a [Luke 8:21] 11:29^a Matt. 12:38–42 ^b1 Cor. 1:22 ¹NU omits *the prophet* 11:30^a Jon. 1:17; 2:10; 3:3–10 11:31^a1 Kin. 10:1–9 ^b[Rom. 9:5] 11:32^a Jon. 3:5 11:33^a Mark 4:21 ^bMatt. 5:15 11:34^a Matt. 6:22, 23 ¹Clear, or healthy ²Evil, or unhealthy 11:38^a Mark 7:2, 3 11:39^a Matt. 23:25 ^bTitus 1:15 ¹Lit. *eager grasping or robbery* 11:40^a Gen. 1:26, 27

LIFE LESSONS

■ **11:28**—God always promises to bless joyful obedience. We delight His heart when we choose

to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to do what He commands us to do.

• LIFE PRINCIPLE 21 •

• • •

OBEDIENCE ALWAYS BRINGS BLESSING.

| Luke 11:28 |

• • •

The Lord's simple requests often serve as stepping-stones to life's most wonderful blessings. Simon Peter illustrates what can happen when we say yes to God.

One day a large crowd pressed around Jesus while He preached (Luke 5:1–11). The Lord wanted to use Peter's boat as a floating platform from which to address the multitude, so He asked the future apostle to push the vessel out a little way from shore (5:3)—not in itself a particularly remarkable request. But Peter's compliance to His request paved the way for a life-changing blessing. From his example, we also learn how essential it is to obey God in even the smallest matters.

The noisy crowd received the first blessing of Peter's obedience; the people could now clearly hear Jesus' words. At the conclusion of the lesson, the Lord said to Peter, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch" (5:4)—a second opportunity to say yes or no. But this time, Peter may have felt tempted to decline. After all, he was a seasoned fisherman. He had worked the entire night for a catch but had returned empty-handed. Now this young teacher—a carpenter, by the way, not a fisherman—was asking him to go fishing again?

Peter's reply demonstrates the beginning of a lifetime of faith in God. He said, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word *I will* let down the net" (5:5, emphasis added). The soon-to-be disciple chose to obey the Lord and to leave the consequences of his decision to Him.

But notice what happened as a result of Peter's obedience—Jesus demonstrated His power and sovereignty. Peter and his partners may have started the day off thinking their efforts had yielded nothing. But they ended it in complete amazement because they pulled in not one but *two* overflowing boatloads of fish (5:7). Saying yes to the Lord's request resulted in a miracle that transformed not only one fisherman's life, but also the lives of the entire group.

Consider three reasons why obedience is critical to the successful Christian life:

1. Obeying God in small matters is an essential step in receiving God's greatest blessings.

Suppose Peter had said, "Look, I'm busy cleaning my nets right now. I can't help You because I'm going fishing again tonight." Or he could have said, "Why don't You ask to use that other boat, over there?" Or, "I've already been fishing today; it would be a waste of time to go again." If Peter had said anything other than yes, he would have missed the greatest fishing experience of his life. But because of Peter's obedience, the Lord arranged a miracle that he would never forget.

Often, God's greatest blessings come as a result of our willingness to do something that appears very insignificant. So ask yourself, "Has God been challenging me to do something seemingly unimportant that I have not yet made an effort to accomplish? Is there anything I have rationalized by saying, 'It's too difficult,'

OUR OBEDIENCE ALWAYS BENEFITS OTHERS.

‘I don’t want to,’ or ‘I have to pray about it first’?”

2. Our obedience always benefits others.

Think of how many people were blessed by Peter’s obedience. Not only could the crowd see the Lord and hear His lesson, but Jesus Himself also benefited—preaching from the boat enabled him to sit down in comfort while He spoke (5:3). Then, of course, Peter’s friends had a very profitable day—they took in two vessels so full of fish that both began to sink. More importantly, they had the opportunity to witness the Lord’s supernatural provision.

God often rewards others—in particular, those closest to us—as a result of our obedience. For example, when a father obeys the Lord, his entire family reaps the reward of God’s blessings. Likewise, a child’s obedience will bless his or her parents. This does not mean that those who choose to disobey the Lord will escape His discipline because of someone else’s godly walk. His call to obedience always demands our response. However, when we live obedient lives, those who know and love us will sense the peace and joy He has given us. Instead of conflict, there will be contentment—and that is just one part of experiencing God’s goodness.

**GOD’S WAYS WILL
NEVER DISAPPOINT US.**

3. When we obey God, we will never be disappointed.

Peter no doubt assumed that Jesus’ fishing instructions would amount to a waste of time. But when he complied with the Lord’s simple request, Christ brought about a miracle that gripped the disciple with amazement. Jesus turned an empty boat into a full one. We, like Peter, must recognize that obeying God is *always* the wisest course of action. He can also take our emptiness—whether related to finances, relationships, or career—and change it into something splendid.

Perhaps you have hesitated to obey God because you fear the consequences of your decision. But the Lord’s command is for you to fear Him above all else. The same sovereign, omnipotent God who keeps your heart beating and the planets orbiting is more than able to handle the results of your obedience. When He tells you to do something and you know without a doubt it is His will, then you need to obey based solely on who is doing the talking.

When you choose to obey the Lord, He will bless you. This is because obedience *always* leads to blessing. I have always told people who say they do not understand why God is asking them to do a certain thing that if they will obey Him, He will reward them with a sense of peace and joy that compares to nothing this world has to offer. Therefore, set a goal to obey the Lord and watch Him work in your life.

*See the Life Principles Index
for further study.*

make the inside also? ^{41a}But rather give alms of ¹such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you.

^{42a}“But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and ^bpass by justice and the ^clove of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. ^{43a}Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the ¹best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. ^{44a}Woe to you, ¹scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ^bFor you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over *them* are not aware of *them*.”

⁴⁵Then one of the lawyers answered and said to Him, “Teacher, by saying these things You reproach us also.”

⁴⁶And He said, “Woe to you also, lawyers! ^aFor you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. ^{47a}Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. ⁴⁸In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹Therefore the wisdom of God also said, ^a“I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they will kill and persecute,” ⁵⁰that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation,

^{51a}from the blood of Abel to ^bthe blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.

^{52a}“Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered.”

⁵³And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail *Him* vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, ⁵⁴lying in wait for Him, ¹and ^aseeking to catch Him in something He might say, ²that they might accuse Him.

Beware of Hypocrisy

12 In “the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, ^b“Beware of the ¹leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. ^{2a}For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. ³Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.

Jesus Teaches the Fear of God

^{4a}“And I say to you, ^bMy friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and

^{11:41} ^a[Luke 12:33; 16:9] ¹Or *what is inside* ^{11:42} ^aMatt. 23:23 ^b[Mic. 6:7, 8] ^cJohn 5:42 ^{11:43} ^aMark 12:38, 39 ¹Or *places of honor* ^{11:44} ^aMatt. 23:27 ^bPs. 5:9 ¹NU omits *scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites* ^{11:46} ^aMatt. 23:4 ^{11:47} ^aMatt. 23:29 ^{11:49} ^aMatt. 23:34 ^{11:51} ^aGen. 4:8 ^b2 Chr. 24:20, 21 ^{11:52} ^aMatt. 23:13 ^{11:53} ¹NU *And when He left there* ^{11:54} ^aMark 12:13 ¹NU omits *and seeking* ²NU omits *that they might accuse Him* ^{12:1} ^aMark 8:15 ^bMatt. 16:12 ¹yeast ^{12:2} ^aMatt. 10:26; [1 Cor. 4:5] ^{12:4} ^aIs. 51:7, 8, 12, 13 ^b[John 15:13–15]

LIFE LESSONS

■ **11:44** — How were the scribes and Pharisees like unmarked graves? Because just as touching the dead defiled a person, so their teachings were causing people to remain unclean. These religious leaders emphasized legalistic compliance to religious dogma and manmade traditions instead of encouraging people to genuinely submit to the Lord. Consequently, they were leading people to eternal separation from Him instead of showing them how to be saved. “They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For

they . . . have not submitted to the righteousness of God” (Rom. 10:2, 3).

■ **11:45** — In hearing the rebuke to the Pharisees, the lawyers were convicted about their own sins of hypocrisy and leading people astray. This upset them. Although Jesus knew how to answer tough questions in a manner that delighted His hearers, He did not neglect the truth to remain popular. He never shrank from rebuking those who needed it in the hope that they would repent and be saved.

after that have no more that they can do.
⁵But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, ^afear Him!

⁶“Are not five sparrows sold for two ¹copper coins? And ^anot one of them is forgotten before God. ⁷But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Confess Christ Before Men

⁸“Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me ^bbefore men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. ⁹But he who ^adenies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

¹⁰“And ^aanyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven.

¹¹“Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. ¹²For the Holy Spirit will ^ateach you in that very hour what you ought to say.”

The Parable of the Rich Fool

¹³Then one from the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

¹⁴But He said to him, ^a“Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?” ¹⁵And He said to them, ^a“Take heed and beware of ¹covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”

¹⁶Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. ¹⁷And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’

¹⁸So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, ^a“Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; ^beat, drink, and be merry.”’ ²⁰But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night ^ayour soul will be required of you; ^bthen whose will those things be which you have provided?’

²¹“So is he who lays up treasure for himself, ^aand is not rich toward God.”

Do Not Worry

²²Then He said to His disciples, “Therefore I say to you, ^ado not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. ²³Life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing. ²⁴Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and ^aGod feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? ²⁵And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? ²⁶If you then are not able to do *the least*, why ¹are you anxious for the rest? ²⁷Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even ^aSolomon in all his glory was not ¹arrayed like one of these. ²⁸If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow *is thrown into the oven*, how much more *will He clothe you*, O *you* of ^alittle faith?

12:5^a Ps. 119:120 12:6^a Matt. 6:26 ¹Gr. *assarion*, a coin worth about 1/16 of a denarius 12:8^a Matt. 10:32 ^bPs. 119:46
 12:9^a Matt. 10:33 12:10^a [Matt. 12:31, 32] 12:11^a Mark 13:11 12:12^a [John 14:26] 12:14^a [John 18:36] 12:15^a [1 Tim. 6:6–10] ¹NU
 all *covetousness* 12:19^a Eccl. 11:9 ^b[Eccl. 2:24; 3:13; 5:18; 8:15] 12:20^a Ps. 52:7 ^bPs. 39:6 12:21^a [James 2:5; 5:1–5] 12:22^a Matt.
 6:25–33 12:24^a Job 38:41 12:26¹ *do you worry* 12:27^a 1 Kin. 10:4–7 ¹*clothed* 12:28^a Matt. 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8

LIFE LESSONS

■ **12:6**— The Lord remembers even the sparrows that end up for sale at the market and knows their plight. So you never have to worry that He has forgotten you. He knows your situation and how best to deliver you from your troubles. Trust Him.

■ **12:15**— True satisfaction in life flows out of fulfilling the purpose for which we were created—to enjoy an intimate relationship with God. Wealth can never substitute for a relationship with Him, and it will ultimately only make the heart feel hollow (Eccl. 6:2).

²⁹“And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. ³⁰For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father ^aknows that you need these things. ³¹^aBut seek ⁴the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

³²“Do not fear, little flock, for ^ait is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³^aSell what you have and give ^balms; ^cprovide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys.

12:30 ^aMatt. 6:31, 32 12:31 ^aMatt. 6:33 ¹NU *His kingdom, and these things* 12:32 ^a[Matt. 11:25, 26]
12:33 ^aMatt. 19:21 ^bLuke 11:41 ^cMatt. 6:20

THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN LUKE’S WRITINGS

In both of his books, Luke highlights the activities of the Spirit with his unique phrase “filled with the Holy Spirit.” The Book of Acts chronicles the anxious anticipation of the Spirit’s coming, the dramatic empowering of the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, and the spread of the church by means of the Spirit’s power. But Luke also highlights the Holy Spirit’s ministry in his Gospel, where the ministry of the Holy Spirit centers on Jesus. Those connected with Jesus—John the Baptist, Elizabeth, Mary, and Simeon—are filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself is filled with the Spirit’s power. The Old Testament prophets had spoken of One who would be empowered by the Spirit of God. Luke underscores in his Gospel that these prophecies have been fulfilled in Jesus (Luke 4:18–22).

Event	Reference	Quote and Explanation
The filling of John the Baptist	Luke 1:15–17	“He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.” John, as the forerunner to Messiah, was empowered from infancy to “make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”
The conception of the Messiah	Luke 1:35	“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you.” The Spirit of God was the agent of divine conception; He made possible the virgin birth of Christ.
The filling of Elizabeth	Luke 1:41	“When Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary . . . [she] was filled with the Holy Spirit.” The Spirit empowered Elizabeth to encourage Mary in her faith.
The filling of Zacharias	Luke 1:67	“Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit.” The Spirit of God indwelt the parents of John so that they might testify about the coming Messiah.
The filling of Simeon	Luke 2:25–27	“The Holy Spirit was upon him.” The Spirit of God led the godly Simeon to an end-of-life encounter with the infant Messiah and a proclamation of the presence of the Messiah.
The baptism of Christ	Luke 3:22	“The Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him.” The visible descent of the Spirit indicates God’s presence with, blessing on, and approval of Jesus.
The temptation of Christ	Luke 4:1–13	“Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit . . . was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil.” The Spirit led Christ into an arena in which He might demonstrate His faithful obedience to the Father.
The inauguration of Jesus’ ministry	Luke 4:14–21	“Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee.” Christ’s ministry, from beginning to end, was marked by the presence and power of God.
Jesus’ teaching on prayer	Luke 11:1–13	“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” This promise by Christ foreshadows the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost.
Jesus’ promise of the Spirit to His disciples	Luke 12:11, 12	“For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.” Jesus promised the comforting and enabling presence of God to His disciples when they were in danger.
Jesus’ prophecy of Pentecost	Acts 1:4–8	“You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” Jesus comforted His confused disciples with the assurance that the Spirit of God would come upon them in a powerful and permanent way.
Pentecost	Acts 2:1–21	“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit.” The advent of the Spirit at Pentecost gave birth to the church and empowered its members to proclaim the Good News.

³⁴For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant

^{35a}“Let your waist be girded and ^b*your* lamps burning; ³⁶and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. ^{37a}Blessed *are* those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down *to eat*, and will come and serve them. ³⁸And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants. ^{39a}But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would ⁱhave watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ^{40a}Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

⁴¹Then Peter said to Him, “Lord, do You speak this parable *only* to us, or to all *people*?”

⁴²And the Lord said, ^a“Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* master will make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of food ⁱin due season? ⁴³Blessed *is* that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ^{44a}Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. ^{45a}But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and

drink and be drunk, ⁴⁶the master of that servant will come on a ^aday when he is not looking for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the unbelievers.

⁴⁷And ^athat servant who ^bknew his master’s will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. ^{48a}But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

Christ Brings Division

^{49a}“I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰But ^aI have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is ^baccomplished! ^{51a}Do *you* suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, ^bbut rather division. ^{52a}For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. ^{53a}Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”

Discern the Time

⁵⁴Then He also said to the multitudes, ^a“Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, ‘A shower is coming’; and so it is. ⁵⁵And when *you see* the ^a“south wind blow, you say, ‘There will be hot weather’; and there is.

^{12:35}^a [1 Pet. 1:13] ^b [Matt. 25:1–13] ^{12:37}^a Matt. 24:46 ^{12:39}^a Rev. 3:3; 16:15 ¹ NU not have allowed ^{12:40}^a Mark 13:33
^{12:42}^a Matt. 24:45, 46; 25:21 ¹ at the right time ^{12:44}^a Matt. 24:47; 25:21 ^{12:45}^a 2 Pet. 3:3, 4 ^{12:46}^a 1 Thess. 5:3 ^{12:47}^a Deut.
 25:2 ^b [James 4:17] ^{12:48}^a [Lev. 5:17] ^{12:49}^a Luke 12:51 ^{12:50}^a Mark 10:38 ^b John 12:27; 19:30 ^{12:51}^a Matt. 10:34–36
^b John 7:43; 9:16; 10:19 ^{12:52}^a Mark 13:12 ^{12:53}^a Matt. 10:21, 36 ^{12:54}^a Matt. 16:2, 3 ^{12:55}^a Job 37:17

LIFE LESSONS

■ **12:37**—The Lord Jesus is coming again, and an eager anticipation of His return should keep us living productively. Although servants attend to their superiors in this world, Jesus says that *He*, the Master, will bless His faithful disciples when He returns to settle accounts.

■ **12:48**—Jesus does not give us gifts, talents, and resources merely to spend them on ourselves. He gives them to us so that we will use them to expand His kingdom and to meet the needs of others—especially fellow believers (1 Cor. 12:4–7; Gal. 6:9, 10).

⁵⁶Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how *is it* you do not discern ^a“this time?”

Make Peace with Your Adversary

⁵⁷“Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right? ⁵⁸^aWhen you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort ^balong the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. ⁵⁹I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite.”

Repent or Perish

13 There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had ¹mingled with their sacrifices. ²And Jesus answered and said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all *other* Galileans, because they suffered such things? ³I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. ⁴Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all *other* men who dwelt in Jerusalem? ⁵I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

⁶He also spoke this parable: ^a“A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, ‘Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why

does it ¹use up the ground?’ ⁸But he answered and said to him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize *it*. ⁹¹And if it bears fruit, *well*. But if not, after that you can ^a“cut it down.”’

A Spirit of Infirmity

¹⁰Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way ¹raise *herself* up. ¹²But when Jesus saw her, He called *her* to *Him* and said to her, “Woman, you are loosed from your ^a“infirmity.” ¹³^aAnd He laid *His* hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

¹⁴But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had ^a“healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, ^b“There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and ^cnot on the Sabbath day.”

¹⁵The Lord then answered him and said, ¹“Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead *it* away to water it? ¹⁶So ought not this woman, ^a“being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?” ¹⁷And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were ^a“done by Him.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

¹⁸^aThen He said, “What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare

^{12:56} ^aLuke 19:41–44 ^{12:58} ^aProv. 25:8 ^b[Is. 55:6] ^{13:1} ¹mixed ^{13:6} ^aMatt. 21:19 ^{13:7} ¹waste ^{13:9} ^a[John 15:2]

¹NU And if it bears fruit after that, well. But if not, you can ^{13:11} ¹straighten up ^{13:12} ^aLuke 7:21; 8:2

^{13:13} ^aActs 9:17 ^{13:14} ^a[Luke 6:6–11; 14:1–6] ^bEx. 20:9; 23:12 ^cMark 3:2 ^{13:15} ^aLuke 14:5

¹NU, M *Hypocrites* ^{13:16} ^aLuke 19:9 ^{13:17} ^aMark 5:19, 20 ^{13:18} ^aMark 4:30–32

LIFE LESSONS

■ **13:3**—The victims of tragedies are not necessarily the recipients of divine judgment. Yet because we live in a dangerous world where tragedies occur without warning, we must always be ready to meet our God (Heb. 9:27).

■ **13:16**—When we care more for keeping rules than we do for the welfare of people made in God’s image, we miss the whole point of our existence. Romans 13:10 explains, “Love is the fulfillment of the law.”

it? ¹⁹It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a ¹large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches.”

The Parable of the Leaven

²⁰And again He said, “To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? ²¹It is like ¹leaven, which a woman took and hid in three ^ameasures² of meal till it was all leavened.”

The Narrow Way

^{22a}And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. ²³Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there ^afew who are saved?”

And He said to them, ^{24a}“Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for ^bmany, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ^{25a}When once the Master of the house has risen up and ^bshut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ^c‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ^d‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ ²⁶then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ ^{27a}But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. ^bDepart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’ ^{28a}There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, ^bwhen you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. ²⁹They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. ^{30a}And indeed there are

last who will be first, and there are first who will be last.”

³¹On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, “Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You.”

³²And He said to them, “Go, tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third *day* ^aI shall be ¹perfected.’ ³³Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the *day* following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

Jesus Laments over Jerusalem

^{34a}“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen *gathers* her brood under *her* wings, but you were not willing! ³⁵See! ^aYour house is left to you desolate; and ¹assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until *the time* comes when you say, ^b‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’”

A Man with Dropsy Healed on the Sabbath

14 Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely. ²And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy. ³And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, ^a“Is it lawful to heal on the ¹Sabbath?”

⁴But they kept silent. And He took *him* and healed him, and let him go. ⁵Then He

13:19 ¹NU omits *large* 13:21 ^aMatt. 13:33 ¹yeast ²Gr. *sata*, same as Heb. *seah*; approximately 2 pecks in all 13:22 ^aMark 6:6 13:23 ^a[Matt. 7:14; 20:16] 13:24 ^a[Matt. 7:13] ^b[John 7:34; 8:21; 13:33] 13:25 ^aIs. 55:6 ^bMatt. 25:10 ^cLuke 6:46 ^dMatt. 7:23; 25:12 13:27 ^a[Matt. 7:23; 25:41] ^bPs. 6:8 13:28 ^aMatt. 8:12; 13:42; 24:51 ^bMatt. 8:11 13:30 ^a[Matt. 19:30; 20:16] 13:31 ¹NU in *that very hour* 13:32 ^a[Heb. 2:10; 5:9; 7:28] ¹Resurrected 13:34 ^aMatt. 23:37–39 13:35 ^aLev. 26:31, 32 ^bPs. 118:26; Matt. 21:9 ¹NU, M omit *assuredly* 14:3 ^aMatt. 12:10 ¹NU adds or not

LIFE LESSONS

■ **13:24**—Not all roads lead to the Lord. Only one does, and that is through Jesus Christ. It’s not that the one true God is exclusive. In fact, He is completely *inclusive*. Jesus said in John 12:32, “I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.” He offers salvation to *everyone* and

would never turn away someone who put his or her faith in Him (Rom. 10:9–13). Jesus is the only door to heaven and the only way for us to know the Father (John 10:7; 14:6; Acts 4:12), but absolutely everyone has the opportunity to experience His wonderful grace.

answered them, saying, “Which of you, having a ¹donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?” ⁶And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

Take the Lowly Place

⁷So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: ⁸“When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; ⁹and he who invited you and him come and say to you, ‘Give place to this man,’ and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. ¹⁰“But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up higher.’ Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. ¹¹“For whoever exalts himself will be ¹humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

¹²Then He also said to him who invited Him, “When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. ¹³But when you give a feast, invite ^athe poor, ^bthe ¹maimed, ^cthe lame, ^dthe blind. ¹⁴And you will be ^ablessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

The Parable of the Great Supper

¹⁵Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things,

he said to Him, “Blessed is he who shall eat ¹bread in the kingdom of God!”

¹⁶“Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, ¹⁷and ^asent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ ¹⁸But they all with one *accord* began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’ ¹⁹And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ ²⁰Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ ²¹So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here *the* poor and *the* ¹maimed and *the* lame and *the* blind.’ ²²And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ ²³Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled. ²⁴For I say to you ^athat none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.”

Leaving All to Follow Christ

²⁵Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, ²⁶“If anyone comes to Me ^band does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, ^cyes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷And ^awhoever does not bear his cross

14:5^a [Ex. 23:5] ¹NU, M son 14:10^a Prov. 25:6, 7 14:11^a Matt. 23:12 ¹put down 14:13^a Neh. 8:10, 12 ¹crippled

14:14^a [Matt. 25:34–40] 14:15^a Rev. 19:9 ¹M dinner 14:16^a Matt. 22:2–14 14:17^a Prov. 9:2, 5 14:21¹ crippled

14:24^a [Acts 13:46] 14:26^a Deut. 13:6; 33:9 ^bRom. 9:13 ^cRev. 12:11 14:27^a Luke 9:23

LIFE LESSONS

■ **14:14** — No one ever outgives God. Any kind deed that we do for someone else — without selfish motives, but in Jesus’ name and for His sake — will be rewarded in heaven. The Lord loves to reward His faithful people, especially when we do things for His glory and not for personal gain.

■ **14:23** — Far from wanting to exclude people

from heaven, God desires “all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4).

■ **14:26** — Jesus calls for an exclusive commitment from His disciples. Everything else should pale in comparison to our love for Him because He alone must be enthroned in our hearts.

and come after Me cannot be My disciple. ²⁸For ^awhich of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish it— ²⁹lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰saying, “This man began to build and was not able to finish?” ³¹Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. ³³So likewise, whoever of you ^adoes not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.

Tasteless Salt Is Worthless

^{34a}“Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? ³⁵It is neither fit for the land nor for the ¹dung-hill, *but* men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

15 Then ^aall the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. ²And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man ¹receives sinners ^aand eats with them.” ³So He spoke this parable to them, saying:

^{4a}“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? ⁵And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes home, he

calls together *his* friends and neighbors, saying to them, “Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep ^bwhich was lost!” ⁷I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents ^athan over ninety-nine ⁴just persons who ^bneed no repentance.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

⁸“Or what woman, having ten silver ¹coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹And when she has found it, she calls *her* friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!’ ¹⁰Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

The Parable of the Lost Son

¹¹Then He said: “A certain man had two sons. ¹²And the younger of them said to *his* father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls *to me.*’ So he divided to them ^a*his* livelihood. ¹³And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with ¹prodigal living. ¹⁴But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. ¹⁵Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the ¹ pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him *anything*.

¹⁷“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired

14:28 ^a Prov. 24:27 14:33 ^a Matt. 19:27 14:34 ^a [Mark 9:50] 14:35 ¹ rubbish heap 15:1 ^a [Matt. 9:10–13] 15:2 ^a Gal. 2:12 ¹ welcomes 15:4 ^a Matt. 18:12–14 15:6 ^a [Rom. 12:15] ^b [1 Pet. 2:10, 25] 15:7 ^a [Luke 5:32] ^b [Mark 2:17] ¹ upright 15:8 ¹ Gr. *drachma*, a valuable coin often worn in a ten-piece garland by married women 15:12 ^a Mark 12:44 15:13 ¹ wasteful 15:16 ¹ carob pods

LIFE LESSONS

- **15:6**—The Lord is passionate about redeeming the lost. He takes great joy in reestablishing a close bond with His wandering ones.
- **15:10**—Jesus cannot talk about heaven and about the redeemed who populate it without talking about joy and gladness. Heaven is a very

happy place because we have been reconciled to the Lord (Rom. 5:11) and have the privilege of enjoying His wonderful presence. Joy is an attribute of God (Gal. 5:22), and we will surely be delightfully blessed by our relationship with Him forever.

servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, ^aI have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”

²⁰“And he arose and came to his father. But ^awhen he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven ^aand in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

²²“But the father said to his servants, ¹‘Bring out the best robe and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on *his* feet. ²³And bring the fatted calf here and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴^afor this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry.

²⁵“Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.’

²⁸“But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹So he answered and said to *his* father, ‘Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. ³⁰But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood

with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.’

³¹“And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. ³²It was right that we should make merry and be glad, ^afor your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.’”

The Parable of the Unjust Steward

16 He also said to His disciples: “There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was ¹wasting his goods. ²So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an ^aaccount of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’

³“Then the steward said within himself, ‘What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. ⁴I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.’

⁵“So he called every one of his master’s debtors to *him*, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶And he said, ‘A hundred ¹measures of oil.’ So he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ ⁷Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ So he said, ‘A hundred ¹measures of wheat.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ ⁸So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than ^athe sons of light.

⁹“And I say to you, ^amake friends for yourselves by unrighteous ¹mammon,

15:18 ^a2 Sam. 12:13; 24:10, 17 15:20 ^a[Eph. 2:13, 17] 15:21 ^aPs. 51:4 15:22 ¹NU Quickly bring 15:24 ^aLuke 9:60; 15:32 15:32 ^aLuke 15:24 16:1 ¹squandering 16:2 ^a[Rom. 14:12] 16:6 ¹Gr. *batos*, same as Heb. *bath*; 8 or 9 gallons each 16:7 ¹Gr. *koros*, same as Heb. *kor*; 10 or 12 bushels each 16:8 ^a[Eph. 5:8] 16:9 ^aDan. 4:27 ¹Lit., in Aram., *wealth*

LIFE LESSONS

■ **15:32**—By giving the son a ring, sandals, and a robe, the father restored the young man to his position in the family. Likewise, when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior, our relationship with Him is completely restored and we are given “the

Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance” (Eph. 1:13, 14). We are irrevocably adopted into His family, which brings gladness and joy, both for us and for the Lord for all eternity.

that when ²you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. ¹⁰^aHe who is faithful in *what is* least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in *what is* least is unjust also in much. ¹¹Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*? ¹²And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your ^aown?

¹³^a“No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

The Law, the Prophets, and the Kingdom

¹⁴Now the Pharisees, ^awho were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they ^dderided Him. ¹⁵And He said to them, “You are those who ^ajustify yourselves ^bbefore men, but ^cGod knows your hearts. For ^awhat is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

¹⁶^a“The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. ¹⁷^aAnd it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one ¹tittle of the law to fail.

¹⁸^a“Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from *her* husband commits adultery.

The Rich Man and Lazarus

¹⁹^a“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and ¹fared sumptuously every day. ²⁰But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, ²¹desiring to be fed with ⁴the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. ²²So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to ^aAbraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

²⁴“Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and ^acool my tongue; for I ^bam tormented in this flame.’ ²⁵But Abraham said, ‘Son, ^aremember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’

²⁷“Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, ²⁸for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ ²⁹Abraham said to him, ^a“They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ ³⁰And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one

^{16:9}² NU it fails ^{16:10}^a Matt. 25:21 ^{16:12}^a [1 Pet. 1:3, 4] ^{16:13}^a Matt. 6:24 ^{16:14}^a Matt. 23:14 ¹ Lit. turned up their nose at ^{16:15}^a Luke 10:29 ^b [Matt. 6:2, 5, 16] ^c Ps. 7:9 ^d 1 Sam. 16:7 ^{16:16}^a Matt. 3:1–12; 4:17; 11:12, 13 ^{16:17}^a Is. 40:8; 51:6 ¹ The smallest stroke in a Heb. letter ^{16:18}^a 1 Cor. 7:10, 11 ^{16:19}¹ lived in luxury ^{16:21}¹ NU what fell ^{16:22}^a Matt. 8:11 ^{16:24}^a Zech. 14:12 ^b [Mark 9:42–48] ^{16:25}^a Luke 6:24 ^{16:29}^a Acts 15:21; 17:11

LIFE LESSONS

■ **16:10** — Faithfulness in the small assignments the Lord gives us qualifies us for the opportunity to serve in greater and more influential ways. Be obedient and faithful where God plants you and watch what awesome things He does through your life.

■ **16:15** — Outwardly, the Pharisees were the picture of religious piety — observing every ritual and faithfully complying with each regulation.

They pointed to their wealth as evidence of the Lord's blessing. Yet they did these things to honor themselves, not God — and the Lord condemned their actions. There is nothing wrong with being successful; the problem arises in how we try to go about it. God says that to be great in the kingdom of heaven we must humbly serve others and glorify Him — not flaunt how great we are.

goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’³¹ But he said to him, “If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.”

Jesus Warns of Offenses

17 Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no¹ offenses should come, but^b woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should¹ offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins¹ against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns¹ to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”

Faith and Duty

⁵And the apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.”

⁶So the Lord said, “If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you. And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from

the field, ‘Come at once and sit down to eat’? But will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink’? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded¹ him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’”

Ten Lepers Cleansed

¹¹Now it happened^a as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

¹⁴So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷So Jesus answered and said, “Were

16:31^a [John 5:46] ^b John 12:10, 11 17:1^a [1 Cor. 11:19] ^b [2 Thess. 1:6] 17:1¹ stumbling blocks 17:2¹ cause one of these little ones to stumble 17:3^a [Matt. 18:15, 21] ^b [Prov. 17:10] ¹ NU omits against you 17:4¹ M omits to you 17:6^a [Mark 9:23; 11:23] 17:8^a [Luke 12:37] 17:9¹ NU omits the rest of v. 9; M omits him 17:10^a Rom. 3:12; 11:35 17:11^a Luke 9:51, 52 17:12^a Lev. 13:46 17:14^a Matt. 8:4 17:15^a Luke 5:25; 18:43 17:16^a 2 Kin. 17:24

LIFE LESSONS

■ **16:31** — God did many wonders through Moses and the prophets and spoke through them about the Messiah, warned His people about judgment, and admonished them to take care of the poor. If the rich man’s brothers would not heed their instruction, how could a miracle change their minds? Likewise, Jesus performed all kinds of miracles — including raising people from the dead (Luke 7:12–15; 8:49–55; John 11:1–44) — and His enemies still crucified Him. Even when He was raised from the dead on the third day, the religious leaders still refused to believe in Him.

■ **17:4** — Jesus is not encouraging irresponsible behavior on the part of the offender, but merciful and gracious behavior on the part of the person

who has been wronged. “Even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do” (Col. 3:13).

■ **17:5** — We do not need *more* faith to comply with the Lord’s instructions, but *genuine* faith. It’s not the amount that matters — even a mustard seed of faith will do. However, it must be based completely on the Lord’s ability, not our own. The almighty power of God can work in an amazing way through a willing vessel (2 Cor. 4:7).

■ **17:10** — Jesus does not want us to grow proud over the things He enables us to accomplish by His Spirit. So Paul writes, “If I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me” (1 Cor. 9:16).

there not ten cleansed? But where *are* the nine? ¹⁸Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" ^{19a}And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

The Coming of the Kingdom

²⁰Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; ^{21a}nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, ^bthe kingdom of God is ²within you."

²²Then He said to the disciples, ^a"The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see *it*. ^{23a}And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after *them* or follow *them*. ^{24a}For as the lightning that flashes out of one *part* under heaven shines to the other *part* under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. ^{25a}But first He must suffer many things and be ^brejected by this generation. ^{26a}And as it ^bwas in the ^cdays of ^dNoah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: ²⁷They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the ^aday that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and ^bdestroyed them all. ^{28a}Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; ²⁹but on ^athe day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all. ³⁰Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man ^ais revealed.

³¹"In that day, he ^awho is on the housetop, and his ¹goods *are* in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. ^{32a}Remember Lot's wife. ^{33a}Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. ^{34a}I tell you, in that night there will be two ¹men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. ^{35a}Two *women* will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. ³⁶Two *men* will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left."

³⁷And they answered and said to Him, ^a"Where, Lord?"

So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

The Parable of the Persistent Widow

18 Then He spoke a parable to them, that men ^aalways ought to pray and not lose heart, ²saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor ¹regard man. ³Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ⁴'Get justice for me from my adversary.' ⁴And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, ^{5a}yet because this widow troubles me I will ¹avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'"

⁶Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. ⁷And ^ashall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? ⁸I tell you ^athat He will

^{17:19} ^aMatt. 9:22 ^{17:21} ^aLuke 17:23 ^b[Rom. 14:17] ¹NU reverses *here* and *there* ²*in your midst* ^{17:22} ^aMatt. 9:15 ^{17:23} ^aMatt.

24:23 ¹NU reverses *here* and *there* ^{17:24} ^aMatt. 24:27 ^{17:25} ^aMark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33 ^bLuke 9:22 ^{17:26} ^aMatt. 24:37-39

^b[Gen. 6:5-7] ^c[Gen. 6:8-13] ^d1 Pet. 3:20 ^{17:27} ^aGen. 7:1-16 ^bGen. 7:19-23 ^{17:28} ^aGen. 19 ^{17:29} ^aGen. 19:16, 24, 29

^{17:30} ^a[2 Thess. 1:7] ^{17:31} ^aMark 13:15 ¹possessions ^{17:32} ^aGen. 19:26 ^{17:33} ^aMatt. 10:39; 16:25 ^{17:34} ^a[1 Thess. 4:17]

¹Or *people* ^{17:35} ^aMatt. 24:40, 41 ^{17:36} ¹NU, M omit v. 36. ^{17:37} ^aMatt. 24:28 ^{18:1} ^aLuke 11:5-10 ^{18:2} ¹respect

^{18:3} ¹Avenge me on ^{18:5} ^aLuke 11:8 ¹vindicate ^{18:7} ^aRev. 6:10 ^{18:8} ^aHeb. 10:37

LIFE LESSONS

- **17:18** — Often, the most unlikely people are the ones who obey God and give Him glory. The Lord always accepts their praise and frequently uses them as the examples of a righteous heart.
- **18:1** — There may be many reasons why God

does not answer our prayers quickly, but until He lets us know that we should stop praying about something, He calls us to persevere in faith and keep asking.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT GROWING IN OUR FAITH

• Luke 18:1–8 •

In Matthew 14, we read how the disciples were caught in a frightful situation. A storm swept in suddenly, and the threat of physical harm became very real. Just as they became convinced that they were about to be swamped by the raging sea, Peter looked out and saw what he thought was a ghost walking toward their boat. But it was not a ghost. It was Jesus. So the overzealous disciple called out to Him asking the Lord to bid him to come to Him.

Thus began a vital chapter in Peter's chronicle of faith. He climbed out of the boat and started walking toward the Savior. Unfortunately, before the disciple reached his destination, the thunderous, buffeting waves took his attention away from the Savior. He froze in fear and immediately began to sink.

There are a couple of things that we can say about Peter's quest that are very positive. First, he got out of the boat and began walking to Jesus while the others stayed put. Second, when he began to sink, he cried out to the Lord. Peter immediately understood the situation was too grave for him and that he needed Jesus.

So the Lord reached out to him and pulled him to safety. Then He asked Peter, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matt. 14:31). Jesus was not scolding Peter as much as He was teaching the disciple that faith and trust in Him were all he needed to reach the goal. The same is true for us.

Have you ever thought about the fact that the way you grow in your faith is by facing challenges and trials? The fact is: this is probably when we grow the most in our walk with Christ. A need arises and there is no way we can fill the void, solve the problem, or decrease the pain. We struggle, fight, and finally call out to the one Person, who knows us fully and loves us unconditionally.

We also grow in faith when we learn to listen to and submit to God's voice. As long as we are chattering and proclaiming our ability, we will never be able to discern His words of hope, direction, correction, and encouragement. The Lord is always speaking to us, but if we aren't hearing from and obeying Him, it's impossible for us to grow in faith.

Peter did the right things: He saw Jesus and he got out of the boat. He wanted to trust the Savior, but his faith was not sufficiently developed. For faith to increase requires our consistency, endurance, and watchfulness. We must continue to stand firm in what we believe. When we do, God will provide the strength and hope to persevere. Therefore, persevere in believing what He says to you. Obey and endure because you will certainly see the fulfillment of all His promises.

*See the Life Principles Index
for further study:*

9. TRUSTING GOD MEANS LOOKING BEYOND WHAT WE CAN SEE TO WHAT GOD SEES.

24. TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS TO ALLOW JESUS TO LIVE HIS LIFE IN AND THROUGH US.

**GOD DESIRES
THAT WE DEVELOP
GREAT FAITH.**

avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

⁹Also He spoke this parable to some ^awho trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ¹⁰"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee ^astood and prayed thus with himself, ^b'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' ¹³And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other; ^afor everyone who exalts himself will be ¹humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Jesus Blesses Little Children

¹⁵^aThen they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them. ¹⁶But Jesus called them to *Him* and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for ^aof such is the kingdom of God. ¹⁷^aAssuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler

¹⁸^aNow a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

¹⁹So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but ^aOne, *that is*, God. ²⁰You know the commandments: ^a"Do not commit adultery,' 'Do

not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' ^b"Honor your father and your mother.'"

²¹And he said, "All ^athese things I have kept from my youth."

²²So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. ^aSell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

²³But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

With God All Things Are Possible

²⁴And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, ^a"How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁶And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?"

²⁷But He said, ^a"The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

²⁸^aThen Peter said, "See, we have left ¹all and followed You."

²⁹So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, ^athere is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, ³⁰^awho shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life."

Jesus a Third Time Predicts His Death and Resurrection

³¹^aThen He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things ^bthat are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be ¹accomplished. ³²For ^aHe will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. ³³They will scourge *Him* and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

18:9^a Luke 10:29; 16:15 18:11^a Ps. 135:2 ^bIs. 1:15; 58:2 18:14^a Luke 14:11 ¹put down 18:15^a Mark 10:13–16 18:16^a 1 Pet. 2:2
18:17^a Mark 10:15 18:18^a Matt. 19:16–29 18:19^a Ps. 86:5; 119:68 18:20^a Ex. 20:12–16; Deut. 5:16–20 ^bEph. 6:2; Col. 3:20
18:21^a Phil. 3:6 18:22^a Matt. 6:19, 20; 19:21 18:24^a Mark 10:23 18:27^a Jer. 32:17 18:28^a Matt. 19:27 ¹NU *our own*
18:29^a Deut. 33:9 18:30^a Job 42:10 18:31^a Matt. 16:21; 17:22; 20:17 ^bPs. 22 ¹fulfilled 18:32^a Acts 3:13

^{34a}But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.

A Blind Man Receives His Sight

^{35a}Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. ³⁶And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. ³⁷So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. ³⁸And he cried out, saying, “Jesus, ^aSon of David, have mercy on me!”

³⁹Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁰So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, ⁴¹saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?”

He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.”

⁴²Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; ^ayour faith has made you well.” ⁴³And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, ^aglorifying God. And all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise to God.

Jesus Comes to Zacchaeus’ House

19 Then *Jesus* entered and passed through ^aJericho. ²Now behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus who

was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. ³And he sought to ^a“see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that *way*. ⁵And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up ¹and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, ²make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” ⁶So he ¹made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. ⁷But when they saw *it*, they all ¹complained, saying, ^a“He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.”

⁸Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the ^apoor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by ^bfalse accusation, ^cI restore fourfold.”

⁹And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because ^ahe also is ^ba son of Abraham; ^{10a}for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

The Parable of the Minas

¹¹Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because ^athey thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. ^{12a}Therefore He said: “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. ¹³So he called ten of his

18:34 ^aLuke 2:50; 9:45 18:35 ^aMatt. 20:29–34 18:38 ^aMatt. 9:27 18:42 ^aLuke 17:19 18:43 ^aLuke 5:26 19:1 ^aJosh. 6:26
19:3 ^aJohn 12:21 19:5 ¹NU omits *and saw him* ²hurry 19:6 ¹hurried 19:7 ^aLuke 5:30; 15:2 ¹grumbled 19:8 ^a[Ps. 41:1]
^bLuke 3:14 ^cEx. 22:1 19:9 ^a[Gal. 3:7] ^b[Luke 13:16] 19:10 ^aMatt. 18:11 19:11 ^aActs 1:6 19:12 ^aMatt. 25:14–30

LIFE LESSONS

■ **18:34** — Why did the disciples so frequently misunderstand Jesus’ words? Can we blame faulty expectations, disobedience, or some other cause? Luke says the truth was hidden from them, and they did not understand what Jesus meant until after He rose from the grave (Luke 24:13–49). Thankfully, we now have the Holy Spirit to help us understand how He is directing us (John 14:26; 16:13–15; James 1:5).

■ **19:10** — The Lord does not merely provide us with an example of godly living, but makes it possible for us to enjoy an intimate relationship with

Himself. All of us “have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23), which means that we are all lost. Yet Christ came to earth to save us (John 3:16–18). He did for us what we could never do on our own (Rom. 5:1, 2).

■ **19:12** — Jesus gave a few clues like this one to indicate that He might not return to earth physically for a long time after His ascension. Until He comes again in His glory (Luke 17:24), we are to continue to faithfully do His work in the power of His Spirit — who is always with us (John 9:4; 14:16, 17, 26; 16:13, 14).

servants, delivered to them ten ¹minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come.’ ^{14a}But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this *man* to reign over us.’

¹⁵“And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. ¹⁶Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ ¹⁷And he said to him, ^a“Well *done*, good servant; because you were ^bfaithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’

¹⁸And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ ¹⁹Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’

²⁰“Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. ^{21a}For I feared you, because you are ¹an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ ²²And he said to him, ^a“Out of your own mouth I will judge you, *you* wicked servant. ^bYou knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. ²³Why then did you not put my money in the

19:13 ¹Gr. *mna*, same as Heb. *minah*, each worth about three months’ salary 19:14 ^a[John 1:1] 19:17 ^aMatt. 25:21, 23
^bLuke 16:10 19:21 ^aMatt. 25:24 ¹a *severe* 19:22 ^aJob 15:6 ^bMatt. 25:26

• LIFE EXAMPLES •

ZACCHAEUS

A Life That Counts

| Luke 19:1–10 |

It wasn’t easy being one of the most hated (and shortest) men in the city, but Zacchaeus the tax collector had learned to handle it. His life was characterized by dishonesty and greed. He had not only collected taxes from the people of his hometown, but he had also added an extra tariff for himself. He also had learned to overcome obstacles in unorthodox ways—which may be how he ended up in a tree trying to get a glimpse of the Messiah as He passed by.

Jesus knew who he was. He also knew that though Zacchaeus had wealth, his life was void of peace, joy, and contentment. So when He saw him peering down from the tree, the Lord said, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house” (Luke 19:5). Within moments, the despised tax collector climbed down from his perch and walked with the Savior to his home.

Have you ever considered how God is willing to meet you right where you are? All He wants you to do is to admit your need for Him. He wants you to do what this man did—turn your life over to Him.

After meeting Jesus, Zacchaeus stopped cheating the people and promised to restore four times all he had taken. He eagerly surrendered everything he had to Christ. For all his shortcomings, Zacchaeus realized that following the Savior was the only way to true meaning and purpose. He had spent many lonely nights counting money. But from this point on, he wanted his life to count for the kingdom of God.

See the Life Principles Index for further study:

4. THE AWARENESS OF GOD’S PRESENCE ENERGIZES US FOR OUR WORK.

23. YOU CAN NEVER OUTGIVE GOD.

bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?"

²⁴"And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.'²⁵(But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.')

²⁶'For I say to you, "that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. ²⁷But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay *them* before me."

The Triumphal Entry

²⁸When He had said this, "He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹^aAnd it came to pass, when He drew near to ¹Bethphage and ^bBethany, at the mountain called ^cOlivet, *that* He sent two of His disciples, ³⁰saying, "Go into the village opposite *you*, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring *it here*. ³¹And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing *it*?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.'"

³²So those who were sent went their way and found *it* just ^aas He had said to them. ³³But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, "Why are you loosing the colt?"

³⁴And they said, "The Lord has need of him." ³⁵Then they brought him to Jesus. ^aAnd they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. ³⁶And as He went, *many* spread their clothes on the road.

³⁷Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to ^arejoice and praise God with a loud

voice for all the mighty works they had seen, ³⁸saying:

^a"Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!"

^bPeace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

³⁹And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."

⁴⁰But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, ^athe stones would immediately cry out."

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

⁴¹Now as He drew near, He saw the city and ^awept over it, ⁴²saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this ^ayour day, the things *that* ^bmake for your ^cpeace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³For days will come upon you when your enemies will ^abuild an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴^aand level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and ^bthey will not leave in you one stone upon another, ^cbecause you did not know the time of your visitation."

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

⁴⁵^aThen He went into the temple and began to drive out those who ¹bought and sold in it, ⁴⁶saying to them, "It is written, ^a'My house ¹is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a ^b'den of thieves.'"

⁴⁷And He ^awas teaching daily in the temple. But ^bthe chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him, ⁴⁸and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to ^ahear Him.

^{19:26}^a Luke 8:18 ^{19:28}^a Mark 10:32 ^{19:29}^a Matt. 21:1 ^b John 12:1 ^c Acts 1:12 ¹M Bethsphage ^{19:32}^a Luke 22:13
^{19:35}^a 2 Kin. 9:13 ^{19:37}^a Luke 13:17; 18:43 ^{19:38}^a Ps. 118:26 ^b [Eph. 2:14] ^{19:40}^a Hab. 2:11 ^{19:41}^a John 11:35 ^{19:42}^a Heb. 3:13
^b [Acts 10:36] ^c [Rom. 5:1] ^{19:43}^a Jer. 6:3, 6 ^{19:44}^a 1 Kin. 9:7, 8 ^b Matt. 24:2 ^c [1 Pet. 2:12] ^{19:45}^a Mark 11:11, 15-17 ¹ NU were
selling, saying ^{19:46}^a Is. 56:7 ^b Jer. 7:11 ¹ NU shall be ^{19:47}^a Luke 21:37; 22:53 ^b John 7:19; 8:37 ^{19:48}^a Luke 21:38

LIFE LESSONS

■ **19:44** — How is it that the vast majority of people alive in Jesus' day did not realize that they were in the presence of God in the flesh? More to

the point, do we realize it when the Lord is doing something special in our midst?

Jesus' Authority Questioned

20 Now ^ait happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, *that* the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted *Him* ²and spoke to Him, saying, “Tell us, ^aby what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?”

³But He answered and said to them, “I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me: ⁴The ^abaptism of John—was it from heaven or from men?”

⁵And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say, ‘Why ¹then did you not believe him?’ ⁶But if we say, ‘From men,’ all the people will stone us, ^afor they are persuaded that John was a prophet.” ⁷So they answered that they did not know where *it was* from.

⁸And Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers

⁹Then He began to tell the people this parable: ^a“A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to ¹vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. ¹⁰Now at ¹vintage-time he ^asent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent *him* away empty-handed. ¹¹Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty-handed. ¹²And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast *him* out.

¹³“Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect *him* when they see him.’ ¹⁴But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘This is the ^aheir. Come, ^blet us kill him, that the inheritance may be ^cours.’ ¹⁵So they cast him out of the vineyard and ^akilled *him*. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to ^aothers.”

And when they heard *it* they said, “Certainly not!”

¹⁷Then He looked at them and said, “What then is this that is written:

^a“The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone?”

¹⁸Whoever falls on that stone will be ^abroken; but ^bon whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”

¹⁹And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they ¹feared the people—for they knew He had spoken this parable against them.

The Pharisees: Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar?

²⁰^aSo they watched *Him*, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor.

²¹Then they asked Him, saying, ^a“Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of

20:1^a Matt. 21:23–27 20:2^a Acts 4:7; 7:27 20:4^a John 1:26, 31 20:5¹ NU, M omit *then* 20:6^a Luke 7:24–30 20:9^a Mark 12:1–12
¹ *tenant farmers* 20:10^a [1 Thess. 2:15] ¹ *Lit. the season* 20:14^a [Heb. 1:1–3] ^b Matt. 27:21–23 ^c John 11:47, 48
 20:15^a Luke 23:33 20:16^a Rom. 11:1, 11 20:17^a Ps. 118:22 20:18^a Is. 8:14, 15 ^b [Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45]
 20:19¹ M *were afraid—for* 20:20^a Matt. 22:15 20:21^a Mark 12:14

LIFE LESSONS

■ **20:20**—Every age has its false teachers and religious impostors, ours included. Jesus told us to be on the alert for them—but even more to make sure that we do not become one of them

ourselves. Each of us must guard our heart against ungodly teaching and the schemes of unbelievers. We must also be careful to remain in the center of God’s will and under His protection.

God in truth: ²²Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

²³But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, ¹"Why do you test Me? ²⁴Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?"

They answered and said, "Caesar's."

²⁵And He said to them, ^a"Render ¹therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

²⁶But they could not catch Him in His words in the presence of the people. And they marveled at His answer and kept silent.

The Sadducees: What About the Resurrection?

²⁷^aThen some of the Sadducees, ^bwho deny that there is a resurrection, came to *Him* and asked Him, ²⁸saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us *that* if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁹Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. ³⁰And the second ¹took her as wife, and he died childless. ³¹Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven ¹also; and they left no children, and died. ³²Last of all the woman died also. ³³Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife."

³⁴Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵But those who are ^acounted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither

marry nor are given in marriage; ³⁶nor can they die anymore, for ^athey are equal to the angels and are sons of God, ^bbeing sons of the resurrection. ³⁷But even Moses showed in the *burning bush passage* that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord ^a"the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." ³⁸For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for ^aall live to Him."

³⁹Then some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well." ⁴⁰But after that they dared not question Him anymore.

Jesus: How Can David Call His Descendant Lord?

⁴¹And He said to them, ^a"How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David? ⁴²Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms:

^a"The LORD said to my Lord,
"Sit at My right hand,
⁴³ Till I make Your enemies
Your footstool."

⁴⁴Therefore David calls Him 'Lord'; ^ahow is He then his Son?"

Beware of the Scribes

⁴⁵^aThen, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples, ⁴⁶^a"Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, ^blove greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, ⁴⁷^awho devour widows' houses, and for a ^bpretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

20:23¹ NU omits *Why do you test Me?* 20:25^a [1 Pet. 2:13–17] ¹ Pay 20:27^a Mark 12:18–27 ^b Acts 23:6, 8 20:30¹ NU omits the rest of v. 30. 20:31¹ NU, M also left no children 20:35^a Phil. 3:11 20:36^a [1 John 3:2] ^b Rom. 8:23 20:37^a Ex. 3:1–6, 15 20:38^a [Rom. 6:10, 11; 14:8, 9] 20:41^a Matt. 22:41–46 20:42^a Ps. 110:1 20:44^a Rom. 1:3; 9:4, 5 20:45^a Matt. 23:1–7 20:46^a Matt. 23:5 ^b Luke 11:43; 14:7 20:47^a Matt. 23:14 ^b [Matt. 6:5, 6]

LIFE LESSONS

■ **20:47**— God's judgment will fall more severely on those who pretend to serve Him for their own personal gain and who use their religious credentials to deceive others. Although there is no longer condemnation for believers (Rom. 8:1), those

who faithfully obey the Lord will receive greater rewards than those who disregard their divine assignments or serve God for their own selfish motives. Each will receive what he has earned (Rom. 2:5–8; 1 Cor. 3:11–15).

The Widow's Two Mites

21 And He looked up ^aand saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, ²and He saw also a certain ^apoor widow putting in two ^bmites.¹ ³So He said, “Truly I say to you ^athat this poor widow has put in more than all; ⁴for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings ¹for God, but she out of her poverty put in ^aall the livelihood that she had.”

Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple

⁵Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was ¹adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, ⁶“These things which you see—the days will come in which ^anot *one* stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.”

The Signs of the Times and the End of the Age

⁷So they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign *will there be* when these things are about to take place?”

⁸And He said: ^a“Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am *He*,’ and, ‘The time has drawn near.’ ¹Therefore do not ²go after them. ⁹But when you hear of ^awars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end *will not come* immediately.”

¹⁰Then He said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹And there will be great ^aearthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. ¹²But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues and ^bprisons. ^cYou will be brought before kings and rulers ^dfor My name’s sake. ¹³But ^ait will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. ¹⁴Therefore settle *it* in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will ¹answer; ¹⁵for I will give you a mouth and wisdom ^awhich all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or ¹resist. ¹⁶You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put ^bsome of you to death. ¹⁷And ^ayou will be hated by all for My name’s sake. ¹⁸But not a hair of your head shall be lost. ¹⁹By your patience possess your souls.

The Destruction of Jerusalem

²⁰“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. ²¹Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. ²²For these are the days of vengeance, that ^aall things which are written may be fulfilled. ²³But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies

21:1^a Mark 12:41–44 21:2^a [2 Cor. 6:10] ^b Mark 12:42 ¹ Gr. *lepta*, very small copper coins 21:3^a [2 Cor. 8:12] 21:4^a [2 Cor. 8:12]

¹ NU omits *for God* 21:5^a Mark 13:1 ¹ *decorated* 21:6^a Luke 19:41–44 21:8^a Eph. 5:6 ¹ NU omits *Therefore* ² *follow* 21:9^a Rev. 6:4 21:10^a Matt. 24:7 21:11^a Rev. 6:12 21:12^a [Rev. 2:10] ^b Acts 4:3; 5:18; 12:4; 16:24 ^c Acts 25:23 ^d 1 Pet. 2:13

21:13^a [Phil. 1:12–14, 28] 21:14^a Luke 12:11 ¹ *say in defense* 21:15^a Acts 6:10 ¹ *withstand* 21:16^a Mic. 7:6 ^b Acts 7:59; 12:2 21:17^a Matt. 10:22 21:18^a Matt. 10:30 21:20^a Mark 13:14 21:22^a [Dan. 9:24–27] 21:23^a Matt. 24:19

LIFE LESSONS

■ **21:13** — Just as the imprisonments of the apostle Paul turned out to be divine opportunities to testify about the gospel of Christ (Acts 9:15; Phil. 1:12), so God will use persecutions to make His Word known.

■ **21:18** — Jesus reminds believers that He will always remain in control, and every detail of our lives will be safe in His loving hands. Although we

will certainly face persecution, not a hair of our heads will be touched without His permission. And if we lose our lives for His sake, it will be according to His purpose and timing. Our eternal lives are secure and our victories are guaranteed. So we should not worry, but should always stand firm in our faith in the Lord.

in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. ²⁴And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles ^auntil the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The Coming of the Son of Man

^{25a}“And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; ²⁶men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, ^afor the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷Then they will see the Son of Man ^acoming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because ^ayour redemption draws near.”

The Parable of the Fig Tree

^{29a}Then He spoke to them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. ³⁰When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. ³¹So you also, when you see these things happening, know

that the kingdom of God is near. ³²Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. ^{33a}Heaven and earth will pass away, but My ^bwords will by no means pass away.

The Importance of Watching

³⁴“But ^atake heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with ¹causing, drunkenness, and ^bcares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. ³⁵For ^ait will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ^{36a}Watch therefore, and ^bpray always that you may ¹be counted ^cworthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and ^ato stand before the Son of Man.”

^{37a}And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but ^bat night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet. ³⁸Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.

The Plot to Kill Jesus

22 Now ^athe Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover. ²And ^athe chief priests and the

21:24 ^a[Dan. 9:27; 12:7] 21:25 ^a[2 Pet. 3:10–12] 21:26 ^aMatt. 24:29 21:27 ^aRev. 1:7; 14:14 21:28 ^a[Rom. 8:19, 23]
 21:29 ^aMark 13:28 21:33 ^aMatt. 24:35 ^bIs. 40:8 21:34 ^{a1}Thess. 5:6 ^bLuke 8:14 ¹dissipation
 21:35 ^aRev. 3:3; 16:15 21:36 ^aMatt. 24:42; 25:13 ^bLuke 18:1 ^cLuke 20:35 ^d[Eph. 6:13] ¹NU have
 strength to 21:37 ^aJohn 8:1, 2 ^bLuke 22:39 22:1 ^aMatt. 26:2–5 22:2 ^aJohn 11:47

LIFE LESSONS

■ **21:24** — The “times of the Gentiles” began when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C., and they will endure as long as Gentiles rule Jerusalem. Although the Jews have had brief control of Jerusalem over the years — especially since the Six-Day War in 1967 — they will not truly take possession of the city until the Messiah, our Lord Jesus, returns. God promised the land to His people, and He will keep His covenant with them to the end (Gen. 13:14–18; 28:10–16; 35:10–12; Ex. 6:2–8; Ezek. 37:24–28).

■ **21:34** — A constant awareness that the Lord could return at any time keeps us spiritually alert and living productively for the kingdom of God. When our focus is on Christ’s Second Coming, we will not be as concerned with the trivial matters of life but will be motivated to obey Him and will

diligently work to tell all people of the salvation He offers.

■ **22:1** — The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread both commemorated how the Lord had delivered the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt (Ex. 12). The Passover celebrated how God spared the firstborn sons of Israel when the death angel passed over their houses, which were marked with the blood of a lamb. During the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Jews observed their hasty escape from Pharaoh and how the Lord sustained them in the desert. Jewish men were required to go to Jerusalem to observe these two feasts. Therefore, Jews from every nation were present to witness Christ’s sacrifice on the cross.

scribes sought how they might kill Him, for they feared the people.

^{3a}Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the ^btwelve. ⁴So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. ⁵And they were glad, and ^aagreed to give him money. ⁶So he promised and sought opportunity to ^abetray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.

Jesus and His Disciples Prepare the Passover

^{7a}Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be ¹killed. ⁸And He sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat.”

⁹So they said to Him, “Where do You want us to prepare?”

¹⁰And He said to them, “Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. ¹¹Then you shall say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, “Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?’” ¹²Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready.”

¹³So they went and ^afound it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover.

Jesus Institutes the Lord’s Supper

^{14a}When the hour had come, He sat down, and the ¹twelve apostles with Him. ¹⁵Then He said to them, “With *fervent* desire I have desired to eat this Passover

with you before I suffer; ¹⁶for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it ^auntil it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

¹⁷Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide *it* among yourselves; ¹⁸for ^aI say to you, ¹I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

^{19a}And He took bread, gave thanks and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, saying, “This is My ^bbody which is given for you; ^cdo this in remembrance of Me.”

²⁰Likewise He also *took* the cup after supper, saying, ^a“This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you. ^{21a}But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. ^{22a}And truly the Son of Man goes ^bas it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!”

^{23a}Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.

The Disciples Argue About Greatness

^{24a}Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. ^{25a}And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ ^{26a}But not so *among* you; on the contrary, ^bhe who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. ^{27a}For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet ^bI am among you as the One who serves.

^{28a}But you are those who have continued with Me in ^aMy trials. ²⁹And ^aI

22:3^a Mark 14:10, 11 ^b Matt. 10:2–4 22:5^a Zech. 11:12 22:6^a Ps. 41:9 22:7^a Matt. 26:17–19 ¹ Sacrificed 22:13^a Luke 19:32

22:14^a Mark 14:17 ¹ NU omits *twelve* 22:16^a [Rev. 19:9] 22:18^a Mark 14:25 ¹ NU adds *from now on* 22:19^a Matt. 26:26

^b [1 Pet. 2:24] ^c 1 Cor. 11:23–26 22:20^a 1 Cor. 10:16 22:21^a John 13:21, 26, 27 22:22^a Matt. 26:24 ^b Acts 2:23

22:23^a John 13:22, 25 22:24^a Mark 9:34 22:25^a Mark 10:42–45 22:26^a [1 Pet. 5:3] ^b Luke 9:48

22:27^a [Luke 12:37] ^b Phil. 2:7 22:28^a [Heb. 2:18; 4:15] 22:29^a Matt. 24:47

LIFE LESSONS

■ **22:3**—Although others such as Saul (1 Sam. 16:14) and the Gergesenes demoniacs (Matt. 8:28–33) were tormented by evil spirits, Judas is the only person whom the Bible explicitly says was possessed by Satan. Many Bible scholars be-

lieve the Antichrist will be as well (Rev. 12–13), and both men are called “the son of perdition” (John 17:12; also 2 Thess. 2:3). Yet realize that whenever we refuse to submit to God’s will, we are aiding the enemy’s plan (John 8:42–47).

bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed *one* upon Me, ³⁰that ^ayou may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, ^band sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Jesus Predicts Peter’s Denial

³¹And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, ^aSatan has asked for you, that he may ^bsift *you* as wheat. ³²But ^aI have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, ^bstrengthen your brethren.”

³³But he said to Him, “Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.”

³⁴Then He said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.”

Supplies for the Road

³⁵And He said to them, “When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?”

So they said, “Nothing.”

³⁶Then He said to them, “But now, he who has a money bag, let him take *it*, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. ³⁷For I say to you that this which is written must still be ¹accomplished in Me: ^a‘And He was numbered with the transgressors.’ For the things concerning Me have an end.”

³⁸So they said, “Lord, look, here *are* two swords.”

And He said to them, “It is enough.”

The Prayer in the Garden

³⁹^aComing out, ^bHe went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. ⁴⁰^aWhen He came to the place, He said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.”

⁴¹^aAnd He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴²saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless ^anot My will, but Yours, be done.”

⁴³¹Then ^aan angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴^aAnd being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

⁴⁵When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. ⁴⁶Then He said to them, “Why ^ado you sleep? Rise and ^bpray, lest you enter into temptation.”

Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

⁴⁷And while He was still speaking, ^abehold, a multitude; and he who was called ^bJudas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. ⁴⁸But Jesus said to him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a ^akiss?”

⁴⁹When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” ⁵⁰And ^aone of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

⁵¹But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this.” And He touched his ear and healed him.

22:30^a [Matt. 8:11] ^b [Rev. 3:21] 22:31^a 1 Pet. 5:8 ^b Amos 9:9 ¹ NU omits *And the Lord said* 22:32^a [John 17:9, 11, 15] ^b John 21:15–17 22:34^a John 13:37, 38 22:35^a Matt. 10:9 22:37^a Is. 53:12 ¹ fulfilled 22:39^a John 18:1 ^b Luke 21:37 22:40^a Mark 14:32–42 22:41^a Matt. 26:39 22:42^a John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29 22:43^a Matt. 4:11 ¹ NU brackets vv. 43 and 44 as not in the original text. 22:44^a [Heb. 5:7] 22:46^a Luke 9:32 ^b Luke 22:40 22:47^a John 18:3–11 ^b Acts 1:16, 17 22:48^a [Prov. 27:6] 22:50^a Matt. 26:51

LIFE LESSONS

■ **22:31**—When Peter denied Jesus three times, the enemy was invisibly working behind the scenes to encourage his spiritual failure. We must always remain on the alert to detect the activity of our adversary, so we can resist him and stand firm in the faith (1 Pet. 5:8–11). We must also stay in the center of God’s will so that we will not give the enemy an opportunity to harm us (Eph. 4:17–32).

■ **22:42**—Taking the penalty for every sin ever committed is an unimaginable burden, and it weighed on Jesus’ sinless heart. Yet here the Lord shows us how to gain the victory in the most difficult situations and most heartbreaking circumstances. We must completely submit our will to His wisdom and trust His unfailing love.

^{52a}Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, “Have you come out, as against a ^brobber, with swords and clubs? ⁵³When I was with you daily in the ^atemple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your ^bhour, and the power of darkness.”

Peter Denies Jesus, and Weeps Bitterly

^{54a}Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest’s house. ^bBut Peter followed at a distance. ^{55a}Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. ⁵⁶And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, “This man was also with Him.”

⁵⁷But he denied ¹Him, saying, “Woman, I do not know Him.”

^{58a}And after a little while another saw him and said, “You also are of them.”

But Peter said, “Man, I am not!”

^{59a}Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, “Surely this *fellow* also was with Him, for he is a ^bGalilean.”

⁶⁰But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are saying!”

Immediately, while he was still speaking, ¹the rooster crowed. ⁶¹And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then ^aPeter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, ^b“Before the rooster ¹crows, you will deny Me three times.” ⁶²So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Jesus Mocked and Beaten

^{63a}Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and ^bbeat Him. ^{64¹}And

having blindfolded Him, they ^astruck Him on the face and asked Him, saying, “Prophesy! Who is the one who struck You?” ⁶⁵And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him.

Jesus Faces the Sanhedrin

^{66a}As soon as it was day, ^bthe elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together and led Him into their council, saying, ^{67a}“If You are the Christ, tell us.”

But He said to them, “If I tell you, you will ^bby no means believe. ⁶⁸And if I ¹also ask *you*, you will by no means answer ²Me or let *Me* go. ^{69a}Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God.”

⁷⁰Then they all said, “Are You then the Son of God?”

So He said to them, ^a“You *rightly* say that I am.”

^{71a}And they said, “What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth.”

Jesus Handed Over to Pontius Pilate

23 Then ^athe whole multitude of them arose and led Him to ^bPilate. ²And they began to ^aaccuse Him, saying, “We found this *fellow* ^bperverting ¹the nation, and ^cforbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying ^dthat He Himself is Christ, a King.”

^{3a}Then Pilate asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

He answered him and said, “*It is as you say.*”

⁴So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, ^a“I find no fault in this Man.”

^{22:52} ^aMatt. 26:55 ^bLuke 23:32 ^{22:53} ^aLuke 19:47, 48 ^b[John 12:27] ^{22:54} ^aMatt. 26:57 ^bJohn 18:15 ^{22:55} ^aMark 14:66–72 ^{22:57} ¹NU it ^{22:58} ^aJohn 18:25 ^{22:59} ^aMark 14:70 ^bActs 1:11; 2:7 ^{22:60} ¹NU, M a rooster ^{22:61} ^aMatt. 26:75 ^bJohn 13:38 ¹NU adds *today* ^{22:63} ^aPs. 69:1, 4, 7–9 ^bIs. 50:6 ^{22:64} ^aZech. 13:7 ¹NU *And having blindfolded Him, they asked Him* ^{22:66} ^aMatt. 27:1 ^bActs 4:26 ^{22:67} ^aMatt. 26:63–66 ^bLuke 20:5–7 ^{22:68} ¹NU omits *also* ²NU omits the rest of v. 68. ^{22:69} ^aHeb. 1:3; 8:1 ^{22:70} ^aMatt. 26:64; 27:11 ^{22:71} ^aMark 14:63 ^{23:1} ^aJohn 18:28 ^bLuke 3:1; 13:1 ^{23:2} ^aActs 24:2 ^bActs 17:7 ^cMatt. 17:27 ^dJohn 19:12 ¹NU *our* ^{23:3} ^a1 Tim. 6:13 ^{23:4} ^a[1 Pet. 2:22]

LIFE LESSONS

■ **22:61**—What kind of look was it? One that expressed compassion? Disappointment? Resignation? Sorrow? We don’t know. We only know

that Jesus used it to remind Peter of His prophetic word, and that look caused Peter to weep.

⁵But they were the more fierce, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from “Galilee to this place.”

Jesus Faces Herod

⁶When Pilate heard ¹of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. ⁷And as soon as he knew that He belonged to ^aHerod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. ⁸Now when Herod saw Jesus, ^ahe was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long *time* to see Him, because ^bhe had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. ⁹Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him ^anothing. ¹⁰And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. ¹¹^aThen Herod, with his ¹men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked *Him*, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate. ¹²That very day ^aPilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.

Taking the Place of Barabbas

¹³^aThen Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, ¹⁴said to them, ^a“You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, ^bhaving examined *Him* in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; ¹⁵no, neither did Herod, for ¹I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by Him. ¹⁶I will therefore chastise Him and release

Him” ¹⁷^a(for ¹it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast).

¹⁸And ^athey all cried out at once, saying, “Away with this *Man*, and release to us Barabbas”— ¹⁹who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder.

²⁰Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. ²¹But they shouted, saying, “Crucify *Him*, crucify Him!”

²²Then he said to them the third time, “Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let *Him* go.”

²³But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men ¹and of the chief priests prevailed. ²⁴So ^aPilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. ²⁵^aAnd he released ¹to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

The King on a Cross

²⁶^aNow as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear *it* after Jesus.

²⁷And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. ²⁸But Jesus, turning to them, said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹^aFor indeed the days are coming in which they will say, ‘Blessed *are* the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!’ ³⁰Then they will begin ^ato say to the mountains, “Fall

^{23:5}^a John 7:41 ^{23:6}¹ NU omits *of Galilee* ^{23:7}^a Luke 3:1; 9:7; 13:31 ^{23:8}^a Luke 9:9 ^b Matt. 14:1 ^{23:9}^a John 19:9 ^{23:11}^a Is. 53:3 ¹ troops ^{23:12}^a Acts 4:26, 27 ^{23:13}^a Mark 15:14 ^{23:14}^a Luke 23:1, 2 ^b Luke 23:4 ^{23:15}¹ NU *he sent Him back to us* ^{23:16}^a John 19:1 ^{23:17}^a John 18:39 ¹ NU omits v. 17. ^{23:18}^a Acts 3:13–15 ^{23:23}¹ NU omits *and of the chief priests* ^{23:24}^a Mark 15:15 ^{23:25}^a Is. 53:8 ¹ NU, M omit *to them* ^{23:26}^a Matt. 27:32 ^{23:29}^a Matt. 24:19 ^{23:30}^a Hos. 10:8; Rev. 6:16, 17; 9:6

LIFE LESSONS

■ **23:8**—Herod had no interest in Jesus as Messiah or Savior; he simply wanted to see wonders performed for him. Yet Jesus refused to speak a

single word to the king. No one can ever manipulate Him into doing his or her bidding.

on us!” and to the hills, “Cover us!”^{31a} For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?”

^{32a} There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death.

³³ And ^a when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, “Father, ^a forgive them, for ^b they do not know what they do.”

And ^c they divided His garments and cast lots. ³⁵ And ^a the people stood looking on. But even the ^b rulers with them sneered, saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God.”

³⁶ The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him ^a sour wine, ³⁷ and saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself.”

^{38a} And an inscription also was ¹ written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew:

THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

^{39a} Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, ¹ “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.”

⁴⁰ But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done ^a nothing wrong.”

⁴² Then he said ¹ to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”

⁴³ And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in ^a Paradise.”

Jesus Dies on the Cross

^{44a} Now it ¹ was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. ⁴⁵ Then the sun was ¹ darkened, and ^a the veil of the temple was torn in ² two. ⁴⁶ And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ^a into Your hands I commit My spirit.” ^b Having said this, He breathed His last.

^{47a} So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, “Certainly this was a righteous Man!”

⁴⁸ And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. ^{49a} But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Jesus Buried in Joseph’s Tomb

^{50a} Now behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. ⁵¹ He had not consented to their decision and deed. *He was* from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, ^a who¹ himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. ⁵² This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ^{53a} Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and

^{23:31} ^a [Jer. 25:29] ^{23:32} ^a Is. 53:9, 12 ^{23:33} ^a John 19:17–24 ^{23:34} ^a 1 Cor. 4:12 ^b Acts 3:17 ^c Matt. 27:35 ¹ NU brackets the first sentence as a later addition. ^{23:35} ^a Ps. 22:17 ^b Matt. 27:39 ^{23:36} ^a Ps. 69:21 ^{23:38} ^a John 19:19 ¹ NU omits *written and in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew* ^{23:39} ^a Mark 15:32 ¹ NU *Are You not the Christ? Save* ^{23:41} ^a [Heb. 7:26] ^{23:42} ¹ NU *Jesus, remember me* ^{23:43} ^a [Rev. 2:7] ^{23:44} ^a Matt. 27:45–56 ¹ NU adds *already* ^{23:45} ^a Matt. 27:51 ¹ NU *obscured* ² *the middle* ^{23:46} ^a Ps. 31:5 ^b John 19:30 ^{23:47} ^a Mark 15:39 ^{23:49} ^a Ps. 38:11 ^{23:50} ^a Matt. 27:57–61 ^{23:51} ^a Luke 2:25, 38 ¹ NU *who was waiting* ^{23:53} ^a Mark 15:46

LIFE LESSONS

■ **23:34**—Although their actions were cruel, the Roman soldiers who carried out the crucifixion could not have understood the eternal implications of what they had done—that they were crucifying the Lord. So Jesus extended His mercy to them, just as He offers it to each of us. This is the nature of God’s unconditional love—no matter what we do, He still cares and bids us to return

to Him. This is also the standard He calls us to. No matter what others do, we must imitate His example of forgiveness (Matt. 18:21–35; Eph. 4:32).

■ **23:43**—One thief had a change of heart while on the cross, and Jesus accepted his expression of faith as genuine. Did the thief deserve such mercy? No. None of us do. But the point is that God’s grace saves us, not our merit.

laid it in a tomb *that was* hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. ⁵⁴That day was ^athe Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.

⁵⁵And the women ^awho had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and ^bthey observed the tomb and how His body was laid. ⁵⁶Then they returned and ^aprepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath ^baccording to the commandment.

He Is Risen

24 Now ^aon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they, ¹and certain *other women* with them, came to the tomb ^bbringing the spices which they had prepared. ^{2a}But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. ^{3a}Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴And it happened, as they were ¹greatly perplexed about this, that ^abehold, two men stood by them in shining garments. ⁵Then, as they were afraid and bowed *their* faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶He is not here, but is risen! ^aRemember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, ⁷saying, “The Son of Man must be ^adelivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.”

⁸And ^athey remembered His words. ^{9a}Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰It was Mary Magdalene, ^aJoanna, Mary *the mother* of James, and the

other *women* with them, who told these things to the apostles. ^{11a}And their words seemed to them like ¹idle tales, and they did not believe them. ^{12a}But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths ¹lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

The Road to Emmaus

^{13a}Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was ¹seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴And they talked together of all these things which had happened. ¹⁵So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that ^aJesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶But ^atheir eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

¹⁷And He said to them, “What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you ¹walk and are sad?”

¹⁸Then the one ^awhose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?”

¹⁹And He said to them, “What things?”

So they said to Him, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, ^awho was a Prophet ^bmighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ^{20a}and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹But we were hoping ^athat it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the

23:54 ^aMatt. 27:62 23:55 ^aLuke 8:2 ^bMark 15:47 23:56 ^aMark 16:1 ^bEx. 20:10 24:1 ^aJohn 20:1–8 ^bLuke 23:56 ¹NU omits *and certain other women with them* 24:2 ^aMark 16:4 24:3 ^aMark 16:5 24:4 ^aJohn 20:12 ¹NU omits *greatly* 24:6 ^aLuke 9:22 24:7 ^aLuke 9:44; 11:29, 30; 18:31–33 24:8 ^aJohn 2:19–22 24:9 ^aMark 16:10 24:10 ^aLuke 8:3 24:11 ^aLuke 24:25 ¹nonsense 24:12 ^aJohn 20:3–6 ¹NU omits *lying* 24:13 ^aMark 16:12 ¹Lit. 60 stadia 24:15 ^a[Matt. 18:20] 24:16 ^aJohn 20:14; 21:4 24:17 ¹NU *walk? And they stood still, looking sad.* 24:18 ^aJohn 19:25 24:19 ^aMatt. 21:11 ^bActs 7:22 24:20 ^aActs 13:27, 28 24:21 ^aLuke 1:68; 2:38

LIFE LESSONS

■ **23:55** — People who want to discredit the Resurrection have at times claimed that the disciples went to the wrong grave. But this verse shows that the women carefully noted which tomb held Jesus’ body.

■ **24:11** — Because they were heartbroken and

disillusioned, it was difficult for the disciples to believe that Jesus really had risen from the dead. It was only after they saw the resurrected Lord and understood His victory over death that they became powerhouse witnesses for Him.

third day since these things happened. ²²Yes, and ^acertain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. ²³When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. ²⁴And ^acertain of those *who were* with us went to the tomb and found *it* just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.”

²⁵Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ^{26a}Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His ^bglory?” ²⁷And beginning at ^aMoses and ^ball the Prophets, He ¹expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

The Disciples' Eyes Opened

²⁸Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and ^aHe ¹indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹But ^athey constrained Him, saying, ^b“Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them.

³⁰Now it came to pass, as ^aHe sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.

³²And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He

talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?” ³³So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them gathered together, ³⁴saying, “The Lord is risen indeed, and ^ahas appeared to Simon!” ³⁵And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was ¹known to them in the breaking of bread.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

^{36a}Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.” ³⁷But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen ^aa spirit. ³⁸And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. ^aHandle Me and see, for a ^bspirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”

⁴⁰When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. ⁴¹But while they still did not believe ^afor joy, and marveled, He said to them, ^b“Have you any food here?” ⁴²So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish ¹and some honeycomb. ^{43a}And He took *it* and ate in their presence.

The Scriptures Opened

⁴⁴Then He said to them, ^a“These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be

^{24:22} ^aMark 16:10 ^{24:24} ^aLuke 24:12 ^{24:26} ^aActs 17:2, 3 ^b[1 Pet. 1:10–12] ^{24:27} ^a[Deut. 18:15] ^b[Is. 7:14; 9:6] ¹explained
^{24:28} ^aMark 6:48 ¹acted as if ^{24:29} ^aGen. 19:2, 3 ^b[John 14:23] ^{24:30} ^aMatt. 14:19 ^{24:34} ^a1 Cor. 15:5 ^{24:35} ¹recognized
^{24:36} ^aMark 16:14 ^{24:37} ^aMark 6:49 ^{24:39} ^aJohn 20:20, 27 ^b[1 Cor. 15:50] ^{24:40} ¹Some printed New Testaments
omit v. 40. It is found in nearly all Gr. mss. ^{24:41} ^aGen. 45:26 ^bJohn 21:5 ^{24:42} ¹NU omits and some honeycomb
^{24:43} ^aActs 10:39–41 ^{24:44} ^aMatt. 16:21; 17:22; 20:18

LIFE LESSONS

■ **24:25** — In many accounts, the disciples did not at first believe that the Lord had risen or recognize Him when He appeared to them. Usually it took hearing His voice or seeing Him perform some familiar action to open their eyes. Unbelief can blind us to the Lord’s work, but trusting God means looking beyond what we can see to what He sees and is doing. Had they believed in His word through the prophets, they most likely

would have anticipated the Resurrection with joy instead of being consumed with sorrow.

■ **24:41** — Jesus had to prove to His unbelieving disciples that He was not a ghost or figment of their imagination before they would accept the truth of His bodily resurrection. Because we know for certain that His body was raised, we can have full confidence that ours will be as well (1 Cor. 15:50–54).

ANSWERS

TO LIFE'S QUESTIONS

HOW DO I HANDLE NAGGING DOUBT?

| Luke 24:38 |

Satan loves to use fear and doubt to discourage believers. He knows if he can get you to question God, then maybe you will give up and abandon His will for your life. Feelings of fear often accompany feelings of doubt and uncertainty. If left unattended, these run-away emotions can tempt you to stop trusting the Lord and His ability to provide for you.

The first step to turning away from doubt and discouragement is to proclaim your faith in Jesus Christ. When trouble strikes, He is your omniscient help. He also is the only One who truly understands you completely. He knows your weaknesses and strengths. He also knows exactly what is needed to encourage you and lift you up so you can continue walking forward in faith.

Second, set a goal to read God's Word each day. This is the best way to combat fear and doubt. The Lord uses a daily reading program to train your mind and to teach you how to handle doubt. The Book of Psalms highlights many personal battles over emotions such as fear, doubt, loneliness, and discouragement. David and others made a conscious decision to trust the Lord through tremendously difficult circumstances and found that God never once failed them.

Third, prayer is essential in fighting fear and doubt. In essence, prayer is faith in action. When we pray, regardless of whether or not we feel like it, we make a statement of faith. We pray because we see God as the solution to what we face. If you are facing a difficult situation, don't hesitate to ask Him to show you the best way to handle it. If your level of trust seems low, don't worry. The

Lord is wise and kind. He wants to teach you more about Himself, not frighten you away. And your faith will increase as you get to know Him better.

Even if you don't feel you have the emotional strength to trust God, don't worry. The Lord is your strength (Ps. 18). A. B. Simpson often told those who found themselves in a difficult spot, "When God tests you, it is a good time for you to test Him by putting His promises to the proof, and claiming from Him just as much as your trials have rendered necessary."

The last thing Satan wants you to do is to go to God in prayer and tell Him you feel doubtful. Always be honest with Him; He knows it all. Honesty breaks the pattern of doubt and provides the right atmosphere for God to work greatly in your life. Remember, He loves you with an eternal love, and He will provide for your every need.

See the Life Principles Index for further study:

9. TRUSTING GOD MEANS LOOKING BEYOND WHAT WE CAN SEE TO WHAT GOD SEES.
8. FIGHT ALL YOUR BATTLES ON YOUR KNEES AND YOU WIN EVERY TIME.

fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.” ⁴⁵And ^aHe opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

⁴⁶Then He said to them, ^a“Thus it is written, ¹and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and ^aremission of sins should be preached in His name ^bto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸And ^ayou are witnesses of these things. ^{49a}Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon

you; but tarry in the city ¹of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

The Ascension

⁵⁰And He led them out ^aas far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. ^{51a}Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. ^{52a}And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³and were continually ^ain the temple ¹praising and blessing God. ²Amen.

24:45 ^aActs 16:14 24:46 ^aActs 17:3 ¹NU that the Christ should suffer and rise 24:47 ^aActs 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18 ^b[Jer. 31:34]
24:48 ^a[Acts 1:8] 24:49 ^aJoel 2:28 ¹NU omits of Jerusalem 24:50 ^aActs 1:12 24:51 ^aMark 16:19 24:52 ^aMatt. 28:9
24:53 ^aActs 2:46 ¹NU omits praising and ²NU omits Amen.

LIFE LESSONS

■ **24:45** — The things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to the unbelieving natural man (1 Cor. 2:14). It always takes the Lord’s wisdom

and influence to help us understand and accept the truth of His Word.