

# Luke 17 Commentary

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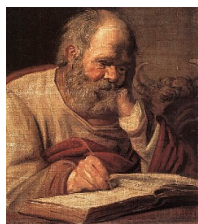
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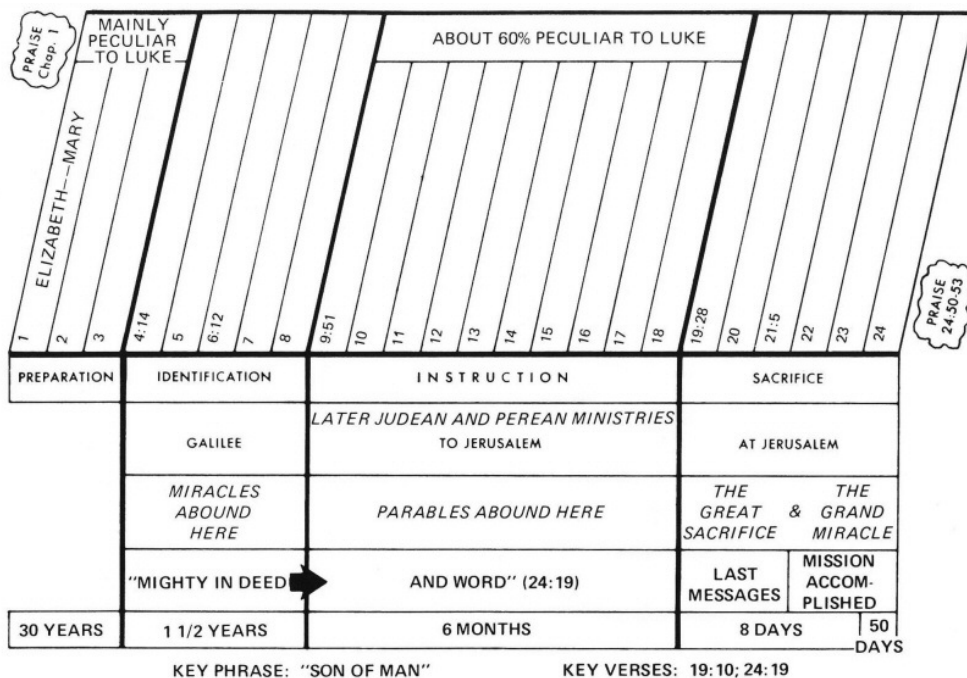
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From [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) by permission  
[John MacArthur's Introduction to the Gospel of Luke](#)  
[Charles Swindoll's Introduction to Luke - Overview Chart](#)  
[NIV Study Bible Introduction to Luke](#)

**Luke 17:1** He said to His disciples, "It is inevitable that stumbling blocks come, but woe to him through whom they come!"

**KJV Luke 17:1** Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

- Matthew 16:23; 18:7; Romans 14:13,20,21; 16:17; 1 Corinthians 8:13; 10:32; 11:19; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 2:14,20; 13:14-18
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:1-4 Relational Sins and How to Deal With Them](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:1-4 Four Hallmarks of Humility, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 17:3-4 Four Hallmarks of Humility, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

Remember the context - Jesus has set His face to Jerusalem and the Cross (Luke 9:51) and He knows these are the last days with His disciples. And so He continues teaching them on things that really matter, preparing them for the time when He will no longer be with them and they would begin ministering in His place.

**Warren Wiersbe summarizes Luke 17 as follows:**

Luke 17:1-6 Forgiveness  
 Luke 17:7-10 Faithfulness  
 Luke 17:11-19 Thankfulness  
 Luke 17:20-37 Preparedness  
 (Borrow [Be courageous](#) Luke 14:24)

**Outline from Norman Crawford (What the Bible Teaches)**

Trespass and Forgiveness (Luke 17:1-4)  
 The Smallness of Faith (Luke 17:5-6)  
 The Duty of Servants (Luke 17:7-10)  
 Where are the Nine? (Luke 17:11-19)  
 The Two Aspects of the Kingdom (Luke 17:20-37)  
[\(What the Bible teaches – Luke\)](#)

**Outline from Clifton Allen (Broadman Bible Commentary)**

### **The Character of the Disciple (Luke 17:1-10)**

- (1) Responsibility to Others (Lk 17:1-4)
- (2) The Need for Faith (Lk 17:5-6)
- (3) Unconditional Service (Lk 17:7-10)
- (4) The Healing of Ten Lepers (Lk 17:11-19)

### **The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man (Luke 17:20-18:14)**

- (1) The Kingdom in the Midst (Lk 17:20-21)
  - (2) The Days of the Son of Man (Lk 17:22-37)
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#### **John MacArthur's Outline:**

#### **Four Hallmarks of Humility (Luke 17:1-10)**

- [Humble People Refrain From Offending Others.](#) (Luke 17:1-2)
- [Humble People Are Ready To Forgive](#) (Luke 17:3-4)
- [Humble People Are Marked By Recognition Of Weakness](#) (Luke 17:5-6)
- [Humble People Are Characterized By Rejection Of Honor](#) (Luke 17:7-10)

#### **Ten Men Healed; One Man Saved (Luke 17:11-19)**

- [The Ten Who Were Healed](#) (Luke 17:11-14)
- [The One Who Was Saved](#) (Luke 17:15-19)

#### **The Invisible Kingdom of God (Luke 17:20-21)**

- [The Kingdom Questioned](#) (Luke 17:20a)
- [The Kingdom Explained](#) (Luke 17:20b-21)

#### **Seven Characteristics of the King's Coming (Luke 17:22-37)**

- [Jesus' Coming Will Be Desired By Believers.](#) (Luke 17:22)
- [Jesus' Coming Will Be Visible Globally.](#) (Luke 17:23-24)
- [Jesus' Coming Will Be Delayed By Rejection](#) (Luke 17:25)
- [Jesus' Coming Will Be Unexpected In Its Timing](#) (Luke 17:26-30)
- [Jesus' Coming Will Be Revealing In Nature](#) (Luke 17:31-33)
- [Jesus' Coming Will Be Divisive In Its Effect](#) (Luke 17:34-36)
- [Jesus' Coming Will Be Permanent In Its Fatality](#) (Luke 17:37)

**Brian Bell** notes that "this is the last teaching of a long Sabbath day that started in Lk 14:1. So Luke names 4 qualities of a true disciple: Offences; Forgiveness; Faith; & Service. Note discipleship's link between true faith, and necessary obedience.

**John Phillips** - The Lord had....had just ended with the solemn unveiling before the souls of everyone in the crowd of the eternal destiny of the lost and the redeemed. The Lord now turns to His disciples. His focus is on the life of ministry to which He has called them. It involves a special relationship, one that was both perilous and precious. (Exploring the Gospel of Luke: An Expository Commentary)

**Mattoon** adds that "In this portion of Luke, Jesus shares a variety of principles that pertain to our ministry with others and serving the Lord Jesus Christ. These principles deal with our attitudes, behavior, and our relationships with other people and God." ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**He said to His disciples** ([mathetes](#)) - Note they are referred to as **apostles** in Lk 17:5, so clearly Jesus is focusing in on the inner circle of men who will continue the Gospel proclamation after He is crucified.

**It is inevitable** ([anendektos](#)) **that stumbling blocks** ([skandalon](#)) **come but woe** ([ouai](#)) **to him through whom they come!**- Jesus is literally saying "It is impossible for the **stumbling blocks** not to come." In other words, **stumbling blocks** are guaranteed to come in the life of the disciples. They could count on it! And we can too, because **stumbling blocks** will continually come to trip up the follower of Christ, for we have three persistent, powerful enemies - the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#). **Woe** introduces a solemn warning for all who would trip up other believers. Notice that the **woe** is not defined and is not the millstone, because that is actually the way to escape the **woe**! In fact it is the easier way out!. Jesus leaves the **woe** undescribed! But considering the alternative which is "better" the **woe** is something we would want to avoid!

**Brian Bell** - "Beware of leading others astray. [not limited to children, but new believers also] **Beware** of doing anything that would cause others to fall into sin. "But I have this liberty!"...but they might not!

**Spurgeon on inevitable** - We are so strangely made that even good men do not always agree, and there are so many bad men about that they will cast a stumbling-block in our way if they can....Since the fall, we are so constituted that there are sure to be differences and disputes. It is a great mercy when men dwell together in unity. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is." It is a work of grace; but nature has its lustings, and lustings lead to strivings; And so, as long as the world is as it now is, **"it is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come."** Let us not, therefore, be either offence givers or offence takers. When anyone offends us, let us say, "It is impossible but that offences will come," and let us make light of it; and let us be very careful that we do not cause others to offend. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Allen's** paraphrase is not bad because as he states the idea of the Greek word in the NT predominantly is that of a "lure" which causes a person to fall into sin. Thus he paraphrases it "*Temptations to sin are sure to come; but woe to him by whom they come*" Allen goes on to suggest some of these "stumbling blocks" - "The harsh word, the thoughtless deed, the frivolous remark-these injurious facets of human relations are inevitable. But that does not lessen the seriousness of the deed nor the responsibility of the offender." (Broadman Bible Commentary)

**Steven Cole** - The false teaching and self-centered, superficial religion of the Pharisees would inevitably cause many of the sinners who had recently turned to Christ (Luke 15:1+) to stumble in their new faith. ([Luke 17:1-4 Relational Sins and How to Deal With Them](#))

**Cole** adds that "We live as sinners in a sinful world, and so we are prone to sin against others and they are prone to sin against us. But just because we're all prone to sin, it does not follow that we should just go with the flow. Rather, we should do all that we can to avoid sinning against others and leading them into sin. And, we should do all that we can to avoid taking offense when others sin against us and to avoid being led into sin by the bad example or teaching of others. The major reason that we are so prone to sin against others and to take offense when others sin against us is that our sinfulness prompts us to justify ourselves and to blame others. As soon as Adam fell into sin, he blamed his wife for leading him into it and he even subtly blamed God for giving him his wife (Gen. 3:12)! Ever since, we all play the blame game. If you don't think that this tendency is inherent in the human heart, you have not raised children! They do not have to be taught to pin the blame on their brother or sister. It comes naturally! I read of a family that bought a parrot. For weeks they tried in vain to teach it to say things like, "You're the greatest!" The husband tried to teach it, "Give this guy a raise." The mom tried, "Clean your room." Nothing. Then one night while the family was eating dinner, the bird started talking, repeating what it had heard the most: "He did it. No, he did it!" Then, "Get out of my room!" (Reader's Digest [8/99], p. 29)." (Ibid)

**Phillips** - The disciples must be prepared. Traps would be set for them. That fact was inevitable given the nature of the battle in which they were engaged. They were up against the very Devil himself. The scribes and the Pharisees were but pawns on the chessboard of time. But woe to them and their like!

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**Disciples** (3101) (**mathetes** from **manthano** = to learn which Vine says is "from a root *math*, indicating thought accompanied by endeavor". Gives us our English = "*mathematics*") describes a person who learns from another by instruction, whether formal or informal. Discipleship includes the idea of one who intentionally learns by inquiry and observation (cf [inductive Bible study](#)) and thus **mathetes** is more than a mere pupil. A **mathetes** describes an adherent of a teacher. As discussed below **mathetes** itself has no spiritual connotation, and it is used of superficial followers of Jesus as well as of genuine believers. **Related Study:** [matheteuo - make disciples](#)

**Inevitable** (418) (**anendektos** from **a** = negative + **endeichomai** = to be possible) appears only here in the New Testament and means impossible or unavoidable. It refers to something that is certain and cannot be otherwise. And so the phrase in the literal version (Young's Literal) reads negatively, "It is impossible for the stumbling blocks not to come." Cleon Rogers adds it is "from the verb meaning "to admit to oneself" hence, "inadmissible," "unallowable."

**Stumbling blocks** (4625) (**skandalon** from a root meaning jump up, snap shut) was originally the piece of wood that kept open a trap for animals. The animal would hit the bait stick, trigger the trap and be ensnared. The word came to be used spiritually of any enticement to sin, especially sin that led to defection from the faith. For example, it might be behavior that would cause a weaker brother to fall into sin (Ro 14:13) or false teaching that was crafted to subtly turn the unsuspected away from the truth ("those who cause dissensions and hindrances [stumbling blocks] contrary to the teaching which you learned" - Ro 16:17+). In short, to put a stumbling-block in someone's way is to do or say something that causes another person to trip or get off the path of following the Lord. The fate of stumbling blocks is described in Mt 13:41. Not every stumbling block is sinful for Jesus Himself is called an "offense" (stumbling block) to those who "stumble over" Him and refuse to believe in Him. So as always context is important when

looking at the meaning of a specific Greek word.

In a similar passage in Matthew Jesus warned "Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes!" (Mt 18:7)

Jesus even used this word when addressing the apostle Peter, Matthew recording "But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a **stumbling block** ([skandalon](#)) to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's." (Mt 16:23)

Outside the Bible it is not used metaphorically, though its derivative skandalethron (e.g. a trap set through questions) is so used. The English word [scandal](#) is derived from the noun via the Lat. **scandalum**. Thus [skandalon](#) was literally, that movable part of a trap on which the bait was laid, and when touched caused the trap to close on its prey. **Skandalon** thus came to mean any entanglement of the foot. Figuratively, as used most often in Scripture, [skandalon](#) refers to any person or thing by which one is drawn into error or sin. ([Click for more detailed notes](#))

**Woe** (alas; How dreadful!) ([3750 - click and select "Phonetics" to hear "ouai" pronounced](#)) ([ouai](#) pronounced "oo-ah'ee," an eerie, ominous foreboding sound some say is like the cry of an eagle) is an [onomatopoeic word](#) (an imitation of the sound) which serves as an interjection expressing a cry of intense distress, displeasure or horror. It may convey a warning of impending disaster to the hearers. Jesus used "Woe" frequently in the Gospels often in an eschatological context (Mt 24:19+; Mk 13:17+). Compare to the 3 woes in Lk 6:24-26+.

Most NT uses of **ouai** are in the context of warning about inevitable, impending judgment, often intermingled with a feeling of pity (Mt 11:21-22, Lk 22:22 = Judas' betrayal). Rev 8:13+ has woe in triplicate which seems to provide the greatest possible emphasis on God's coming judgment on the world, much as the cry of "holy" in triplicate emphasizes His holiness. Indeed, His perfect holiness demands His perfect judgment! In the Lxx a double woe is addressed to unfaithful Jerusalem because of her idolatry and immorality (Ezek 16:23). **Ouai** does **not** depict sorrow on the part of those who have sinned (as some have mistakenly taught).

**Ouai - 47x in 36v - woe(46), woes(1).** Matt. 11:21; Matt. 18:7; Matt. 23:13; Matt. 23:14; Matt. 23:15; Matt. 23:16; Matt. 23:23; Matt. 23:25; Matt. 23:27; Matt. 23:29; Matt. 24:19; Matt. 26:24; Mk. 13:17; Mk. 14:21; **Lk. 6:24; Lk. 6:25; Lk. 6:26; Lk. 10:13; Lk. 11:42; Lk. 11:43; Lk. 11:44; Lk. 11:46; Lk. 11:47; Lk. 11:52; Lk. 17:1; Lk. 21:23; Lk. 22:22;** 1 Co. 9:16; Jude 1:11; Rev. 8:13; Rev. 9:12; Rev. 11:14; Rev. 12:12; Rev. 18:10; Rev. 18:16; Rev. 18:19

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**ILLUSTRATION** - According to the Associated Press, on the evening of February 6, 1996, several teenagers drove the rural roads east of Tampa, Florida, with the intent of playing pranks. Tragically, their game was anything but funny. They pulled some twenty street signs out of the ground, including the stop sign at one fateful intersection. The next day, three of their buddies, who had just finished bowling, breezed through that intersection without stopping. Their car sailed into the path of an eight-ton truck, and they were all killed. One year later, the three perpetrators of the deadly prank were convicted of manslaughter. In June of 1997, they stood in orange jail jump-suits and handcuffs before a judge in a Tampa courtroom, weeping and wiping their eyes, and were sentenced to fifteen years in prison. It is a dangerous thing with tragic consequences for anyone to take down a signpost on the highway. It is no less dangerous for anyone to vandalize the signposts that God puts on the highway of life. When we honor God's commandments, we point people in the right direction. If we dishonor God's commandments, if the example or testimony of our life stinks, we become a stumbling block and can unwittingly lead others to destruction. Jesus addresses this problem here. ([Mattoon Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**Mouse Trap** – (invented by Sir Hiram Stephen Maxim) - A very simple device made up of a flat wooden platform; A wire acting as a hammer; a spring that gives the hammer the quickness it needs; a metal bar that holds the hammer back; & a sensitive little catch; that when you touch it with the slightest pressure it releases the metal bar, and the hammer comes slamming down on its victim. There are many things in this world that trap not mice but men! There are traps of unforgiveness...which "sever" relationships. And thus imprison countless Christians in its jaws!

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**Luke 17:2 "It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea, than that he would cause one of these little ones to stumble."**

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KJV Luke 17:2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea,

than that he should offend one of these little ones.

- **It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck** Matthew 18:6; 26:24; Mark 9:42; 1 Corinthians 9:15; 2 Peter 2:1-3
- **than that he would cause one of these little ones to stumble** Isaiah 40:11; Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 18:3-5,10,14; John 21:15; 1 Corinthians 8:11,12; 9:22
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:1-4 Relational Sins and How to Deal With Them](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:1-4 Four Hallmarks of Humility, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passage:

Mt 18:5-7 "And whoever receives (deliberately and readily welcomes) one such child in My name receives Me (I.E., THE WAY A PERSON TREATS ANOTHER BELIEVER [OR EVEN AN UNBELIEVER] IS THE WAY HE TREATS JESUS) 6 but whoever causes one of these little ones (I.E., SPIRITUAL CHILDREN AS DESCRIBED IN Mt 18:3-4) who believe in Me to stumble ([skandalizo](#)), it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea (THE DISCIPLES HAD JUST BEEN ARGUING ABOUT WHO WAS GREATEST-THEY WERE SINNING AND DOUBTLESS CAUSING OTHER DISCIPLES TO SIN - ANGER, RESENTMENT, ETC. WOE!). 7 (LUKE'S VERSION LACKS THIS VERSE) "Woe to the world (FALLEN, GODLESS, ANTI-GOD SYSTEM) because of its stumbling blocks (THE LIST IS ENDLESS - BUT THINK OF DOUBLY "R-RATED" SHOWS LIKE "GAME OF THRONES" WHICH MANY WHO CLAIM TO FOLLOW CHRIST ARE WATCHING - I KNOW THIS FROM PERSONAL COMMUNICATION WITH A LOCAL PASTOR).! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes! (IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JESUS' SOLUTION READ Mt 18:8-9)

[Matthew 18:5-9 The Danger of Causing a Christian to Sin](#) - The basic truth of that verse is that it is impossible to separate Christ from His people and that, consequently whatever affects believers, affects Him. Specifically whoever receives a child of God in Christ's name receives Christ. As is clear from the context, Jesus was using the child He held in His arms only as an illustration. One such child identifies the specific child being referred to in the context. This can only mean the one who spiritually becomes a little child, as described in verses 3-4. Jesus was not speaking of the toddler himself but was using him to represent the children of God....Believers are to receive one another with tenderness, care, kindness, and love, opening up their hearts to welcome fellow believers no matter who they are. In so doing, they embrace the Lord Christ who lives in them. We are to care for each other like precious children. What a vital message to the church!...When a person mistreats a Christian he mistreats Christ. This side of the truth also applies to believers and unbelievers. Whether the person is the worst persecuting pagan who causes harm to a Christian or whether he is a believer who causes harm to a fellow Christian, the result is the same: Christ Himself is attacked. (John MacArthur)

### AN AWFUL AND TERRIBLE CONDEMNATION

**Mattoon** - Great sorrow awaits the person that tempts others to sin and spiritually fail. If you know Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have a bull's eye on your back, especially if you are living your life for Christ. You have a target on you and Satan and his forces are out to stop you for sure. Jesus says this is a fact of life for the Christian. The Lord issues a grave warning to anyone that would be used of Satan to cause believers, especially "little ones" or new believers, to spiritually fall, stumble, or be led astray from the Lord. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea**- Jesus is saying it would have been **better** for this person to have died before he offended a **little one**! The KJV ([Textus Receptus](#)) has the Greek word *mulos* signifying a great millstone that would be 4-5 feet diameter, 1 foot thick, and weighing thousands of pounds. More modern Biblical transcripts have the Greek word *mulikos* which is used only here and means belonging to a mill without saying how big the millstone is. See Wikipedia discussion of [millstone](#) (some stones up to 3300 pounds!) The **millstone** Jesus spoke of is the surely a huge millstone, not the small hand millstone used by the women to grind a little grain at a time. It would be "like being fit for a pair of concrete shoes!" ([Bell](#)) The person would sink and stay on the bottom of the sea even no matter how hard they fought to free themselves - what a frightening and terrible thought (I have also feared death by dying and this picture is even worse!). **Were thrown into the sea** (Hurlled into the sea! Mt 18:6, Mk 9:42) this person would sink to the bottom like a rock and drown, desperately



trying to rise to the surface but impeded by the heavy weight around their neck! Jesus is not a torturer, but He is trying to get across how horrible it is to trip up a "little one!" It would be better for that person to die than to trip up a little one! Jesus depicts a death that is so horrible it is difficult to imagine. This warning would surely be an attention grabber!

**It would be better** (lusitelei) is used only here in the Bible and means to be advantageous, to be useful, to be to someone's advantage. What is the "advantage?" To be thrown into water with such a heavy weight that escape would be impossible would result in horrible drowning! It makes me think of the frantic reactions we see portrayed in those who are "[water boarded](#)!" That implies that the fate of those who cause little ones to stumble is FAR WORSE than drowning this way!

**Spurgeon** - To do grievous damage to the soul of the very least of Christ's people, is a great and ruinous sin; nothing can be worse. God grant that we may not do this even inadvertently! Let not the strong indulge in that which would be unsafe for the weak, lest the weak be led into sin through that which the strong brother might find lawful, but which certainly would not be expedient. May none of us ever willfully grieve any child of God! ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**MacArthur** - In the most vivid and sobering language indicating the seriousness of such an act against one of God's children, Jesus declared that a person who does such a thing would be better off dying a terrible death. It would be **better for him**, in fact, **that a heavy millstone be hung around his neck, and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea**. (See [Matthew Commentary](#))

**Steven Cole** - Jesus says that it would be better to suffer a Mafia-style death, having a heavy millstone hung around your neck and being cast into the sea, than to cause one of these little ones to stumble! He is not saying that the penalty for causing a little one to stumble is to have a millstone hung around your neck and to be cast into the sea. That would be far better than the penalty that God will impose! This does not mean that Christians who cause someone else to stumble will lose their salvation and incur God's eternal wrath. If that were so, none could be saved, because we all have sinned in this manner. David sinned in this manner when he committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband killed, causing the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme (2 Sam. 12:14). Peter sinned in this manner when he fell into hypocrisy out of fear of the Judaizers, so that other Jewish believers and even Barnabas joined him in hypocrisy (Gal. 2:12-13). But both men repented of their sin and experienced God's forgiveness. Indeed, the mark of a true believer is that when he sins and leads a weaker believer into sin, he confesses that sin and does everything he can to help restore the fallen brother or sister. If the professing Christian does not repent, there may be good cause for questioning the genuineness of his faith. Jesus uses this graphic picture to show how serious relational sins are in God's sight. His warning ought to scare us all into taking our offenses against others seriously. In Matthew 5:23-24<sup>+</sup> He says, "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering." In other words, our relational sins hinder our worship! Jesus' warning especially ought to scare those of us in positions of church leadership. I once heard Bill Bright, the founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, say that he often has prayed that God would take his life before he ever would be unfaithful to his wife. That would be a good thing for every Christian leader to pray. We must be on guard because we're prone to sin and because God takes relational sins so seriously. Thankfully, the way of repentance and forgiveness is always available. Thus Jesus goes on to instruct us what to do when someone sins against us. ([Relational Sins and How to Deal With Them](#))

**One of these little ones** - "One" is emphatic in the Greek, making the point that it is a serious sin to offend even just ONE! This most likely refers to new believers, e.g., the sinners and tax-gatherers who were coming to Him in Luke 15:1. This also implies they are those who would be more vulnerable to being stumbled by others. **Cole** adds that "Just as parents want to guard their children from people who would harm them, so God is concerned that His babes not be hurt by those who claim to be Christians, but who set a bad example. While each person, including the new believer, is responsible for his own sin, there is a sense in which those who are more mature in the faith bear responsibility for the babes in the faith." ([Relational Sins](#))

This verb, **cause...to stumble**, has the same root as **stumbling blocks** (skandalon) in Lk 17:1 producing a wordplay that is difficult to reproduce in English. It is possible that the primary cause of offense here would be leading disciples ("little ones") astray in a similar fashion.

**How do we cause one to stumble?** The simple answer is that we in some way cause them to commit sin. Think of Eve. She was tempted by Satan and sinned and what did she do? She immediately tempted Adam to sin! And who could forget the first high priest of Israel, Aaron, who caused the entire nation to sin by molding and worshiping a golden calf?! Jeroboam was an evil king about whom we read "he made Israel to sin." (1 Ki 14:16) and as a result thereafter we see him "immortalized" in the phrase "the sins of Jeroboam" describing others who walked in his evil steps (cf 1 Ki 15:30, 16:31, 2 Ki 3:3, 10:29, 31, 13:2, 11, 14:24, 15:9, 18, et al) What if we as a husband ask our wife about a tax deduction that is not really legal? We sin and we include her in the sin! We can cause others to stumble indirectly as when a parent plays favorites (and the one not the favorite acts out in a sinful manner). Or what about when we treat our wives in an insensitive or unloving manner and it causes them to sin (bitterness, anger, unforgiveness, etc)? We can also cause others to stumble when we lead them by a sinful example, without even saying a word. This is especially a danger for parents, whose little children are watching the actions of their parents (and of course listening to their words). And if our

actions (and/or words) as parents are sinful, we are potentially causing our children to stumble! Woe! There is one other subtle way we can cause others to stumble and that is by flaunting our liberty we have in Christ. And so a "strong" Christian might participate in an activity (in first century Christianity eating meat sacrificed to idols) that is not in itself sinful, but which if witnessed by a "weaker" (in faith) Christian might cause the latter to stumble into sin. Paul writes "Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way." (Ro 14:13).

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**ILLUSTRATION** - The story is told of an alcoholic father who stole out of the house one winter night to go to his favorite tavern. He had not gone far when he heard a soft crunching noise in the snow behind him. He turned around to see his five-year-old boy a few yards behind him. When he asked his son what he was doing, the boy replied, "I'm trying to follow in your footsteps, Dad." According to the story the man never took another drink. (John MacArthur)

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**Cause...to stumble** (to take offense) (4624)([skandalizo](#) from [skandalon](#)= a trap = put a snare or stumbling block in way; English = scandalize = to offend the moral sense of) means to put a snare (in the way), hence to cause to stumble, to give offense. To entrap, trip up, or entice to sin, offend. So in Mt 5:29-30 **skandalizo** is used in the active sense which conveys the idea to cause to do wrong, to entice to commit sin. In the passive sense it means to be led into sin, to be caused to do wrong. In the passive some uses mean to be offended (Mt 11:6), the idea being that one is taking offense at Jesus and/or refusing to believe in Him. Finally, **skandalizo** can mean to furnish an occasion for some to be shocked, angered, or offended (Mt 17:27).

**William Barclay** says that stumble "originally meant the bait-stick in a trap. It then came to mean any stumbling-block placed in the way to trip somebody up. Jesus said that it was impossible to construct a world with no temptations; but woe betide the person who taught another to sin or who took away another's innocence. Everyone must be given that first invitation to sin, that first push along the wrong way. The story is told of an old man who was dying. Something was obviously worrying him. He told them at last what it was. 'When I was a lad,' he said, 'I often played on a wide common. Near its centre two roads met and crossed, and, standing at the crossroads, was an old rickety signpost. I remember one day twisting it round in its socket, thus altering the arms and making them point in the wrong direction; and I've been wondering ever since how many travellers I sent on the wrong road.' God will not hold anyone guiltless, who, on the road of life, sends a younger or a weaker person on the wrong way. ([Luke 18 Commentary - Daily Study Bible](#))

**Gilbrant** says [skandalizo](#) "is used frequently in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew yaqōsh, "to catch in a trap, snare" (cf. Joshua 23:13; Judges 2:3; 8:27) and kāsāl, "to stumble" (cf. Leviticus 19:14; 1 Samuel 25:31; Psalm 119:165). In the New Testament these two ideas were eventually merged into one with the resultant meaning of "cause of ruin" or "a stumbling block." The word "offenses" here carries the much stronger connotation of "causes to reject God." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

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**Mattoon** - How does a person become a stumbling block and lead others astray? There are two key channels.

**1. False teaching:** This is an effective way that religious leaders steer young Christians in the wrong direction. Many cults prey upon new Christians or Christians that are out of church and have a baby mentality when it comes to spiritual matters. This is why it is so important to know the Bible so you will not be confused or led astray.

**2. Faults in the Example of Christians:** Christians can cause young Christians to spiritually stumble by faults in their own lives. Immorality, drinking, drugs, gambling, cursing, involvement in pornography, temper tantrums, greed, griping, laziness, etc., can turn people OFF to church and the Lord, or they can turn people ON to this kind of lifestyle.

For example, some folks ask, "What's wrong with a drink once in a while?" The answer is, "God says stay away from it in Proverbs. Don't even look at it." Secondly, your example may encourage others to think it is OK to drink alcohol. You may not become a drunk, but somebody else may, because your example got them started. People ARE watching our lives. Why do you think folks keep saying, "I'm not going to church because of all the hypocrites in the church." They are watching people that profess to be Christians! What in the world do they see in the lives of the folks that go to our church? We are the LORD's ambassadors. We are to represent Him and be as shining lights in this world. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**Luke 17:3** "Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him."

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KJV Luke 17:3 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.



- **Be on your guard** Luke 21:34; Exodus 34:12; Deuteronomy 4:9,15,23; 2 Chronicles 19:6,7; Ephesians 5:15; Hebrews 12:15; 2 John 1:8
- **If your brother sins** Matthew 18:15-17,21
- **rebuke** Leviticus 19:17; Psalms 141:5; Proverbs 9:8; 17:10; 27:5; Galatians 2:11-14; James 5:19
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:1-4 Relational Sins and How to Deal With Them](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:1-4 Four Hallmarks of Humility, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 17:3-4 Four Hallmarks of Humility, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

## PATTERN TO FOLLOW IF A BROTHER SINS AGAINST YOU

**Be on your guard!** ([prosecho](#)) Since it is inevitable that stumbling blocks will come, it is mandatory that a disciple stay constantly taking heed or giving attention. The [present imperative](#) calls for the disciples of Jesus (including us) to continually pay attention, a command which ultimately is not naturally possible but necessitates continuous reliance on the supernatural empowerment of the Spirit Who was with the disciples before Pentecost and is now in all disciples (Jn 14:16-17).

**If your brother sins** ([hamartano](#)), **rebuke** ([epitimao](#) in [aorist imperative](#)) **him**; and if he repents ([metanoeo](#)), **forgive** ([aphiemi](#) in [aorist imperative](#)) **him**. - This is not an easy verse to practice. One must be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18+) and Word (Col 3:16+ ~ "admonishing one another") to obey these serious commands! If one has not looked at themselves first in the mirror for any taint of sin, they need to be very cautious and hesitant to address their brother's sin. In Greek the "your brother" is emphatic. This is someone of which you are intimately connected in a family way. So in this verse we are to treat like "family." Note that while Lk 17:1-2 is directed to the offender, Lk 17:3-4 is addressed to one who is offended. After issuing the warning to **be on your guard** Jesus then proceeds to give two commands to obey if **your brother** (implies he is a believer) **sins** (against you). **IF** is third class condition which speaks of a potential action (i.e., he sins against you). First **rebuke** ([epitimao](#)) him which means to give admonish, disapprove of his sin, and it may include censure, reprimand, or a stern warning. [Epitimao](#) has the nuance of a frank, but gentle admonition, as politely telling him that he is wrong, doing this instead of harboring a grudge! Jesus says there will be times when you will have to look someone in the eyes and point out their sin, addressing it straight up and head on (with sensitivity, compassion and love Gal 6:1+, Eph 4:15+, Eph 4:29+, 1Cor 16:14+, not with glee, not with a "get 'em attitude," not with an air of arrogance! Remember that we don't get closer to God by passing judgment on others.). **IF** (also a third class condition = he might repent) he repents, then you are commanded to **forgive** him. The [aorist imperative](#) calls for a specific act which is complete, but the completed act may be repeated. Think about this for a moment. What would happen if he repented but you refused to **forgive**? Have you not in a sense just placed a stumbling block of unforgiveness in his path? In a very real sense that is what you have done, so you need to re-read the warning in Lk 17:1-2, **repent** of your unforgiveness and then **forgive**!

Jesus gives us a "four step" procedure on how to rebuke a sinner in Matthew 18 teaching that (STEP 1) "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. (STEP 2) But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. (STEP 3) If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and (STEP 4) if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." (Mt 18:15-17)

**Steven Cole** makes the point that "When Jesus warns, '**Be on your guard**,' He means that each of us needs to look first and foremost to our own hearts. Take the log out of your own eye and then you may be able to help your brother with the speck in his eye, but not before then (Matt. 7:3-5). When relational conflicts erupt, the first thing you should do is to ask God to show you what part you are responsible for. If you think that, being generous, you're responsible for ten percent of the problem, you can safely multiply that number by four or five! We all are prone to justify ourselves and blame others. But healing will not begin in damaged relationships until each person allows the Spirit of God through the Word of God to shine into his or her own heart and reveal the sin that is there. We must be on guard against relational sins because we are so prone towards them." ([Luke 17:1-4 Relational Sins and How to Deal With Them](#))

**MacArthur** writes that "**be on your guard** against the influence of the scribes and Pharisees is a caution against acting like unbelievers by both giving offense, and being indifferent to the sins of others." (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Luke 11-17)

**Leon Morris** on **rebuke him** - This does not mean that he will adopt an attitude of censoriousness, for the context stresses forgiveness. It means that, though he will be compassionate, he will not be weak. He cannot be indifferent to evil, but this does not mean that he will bear a grudge. ([The Gospel According to St. Luke: An Introduction and Commentary](#) - borrow)

**Allen** on **rebuke him** - "This does not mean that we are to attack him with arrogant accusations and demands for apology. Rather,

we are to seek the brother out, expose the problem in its seriousness to him, and express the desire for fellowship. If his attitude is right, he will adopt the proper attitude without coercion. This teaching presupposes a desire for fellowship on his part also." (Broadman Bible Commentary – Luke-John)

**Mattoon** - This rebuke is to be strong enough to inspire repentance. To "rebuke" does not mean to point out every sin, for Jesus also warns against being judgmental. Rebuke is always to be done in love and compassion, not in a censoring and judgmental spirit. Its purpose is to bring the sin to the attention of the offending person and restore them to fellowship with the Lord and other believers. In this passage, this refers to sin that could pull that person or others away from God, and result in the horrible judgment. When a person feels that he or she must rebuke another Christian for a sin, it is wise and essential for that person to check his or her attitudes and motivations first. He needs to take a good look at himself to make sure there are no faults in his own life that he has not made right with God or other people. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Mattoon** - Unless rebuke is tied to forgiveness, it will not help the sinning person. Rebuking a fellow believer requires care. Finding fault, and expressing it effectively are delicate proceedings. People are easily offended. In a first-time confrontation, try these six steps:

- 1. Appeal to the Lord in Prayer: Pray and ask the Lord for help in getting your concern across without creating antagonism or defensiveness.
- 2. Approach: Approach the other person as a friend, not an adversary.
- 3. Assume: Imagine the most innocent possible reason for the other's fault, not the most insidious or repulsive reason.
- 4. Agreement: Make your approach a series of gradual and mutual agreements: "Could I speak to you? I'm having trouble with something. May I ask you about it?" Notice these statements are questions, not accusations.
- 5. Abridge Your Words: State your case and concerns once, very clearly. Repetition becomes the pounding of a jack hammer.
- 6. Appreciation: Express gratitude for the conversation, confidence in the friendship, and cordial expectations for the future. Show that you harbor no doubt that the matter has been solved. The person may not get matters right in their life after you have spoken with them. They will, however, be aware that others are watching. They may curb what they are doing, and it is possible, they may also become defensive and lash out at you. No matter how they respond, the rest is up to the Lord. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

The goal of rebuking is not to "put them in their place" or to "get them," or "to get it off your chest" but to stimulate in their heart a desire to seek to repent. Be sure to do an attitude check, so that you are not rebuking them just to prove you are right and they are wrong. The goal is repentance and restoration of that person's relationship with the Lord and with others. Paul gives us the right attitude in Galatians 6:1 when he writes

Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; **each one looking to yourself**, so that you too will not be tempted (enticed to sin yourself!).

**Comment:** Note the "caveat" of looking at your own heart, checking your own motives, examining your own walk with Jesus! Also take note of the verb restore, the Greek verb [katartizo](#), which conveys the fundamental idea of putting something into its appropriate condition so it will function well. It denotes setting right what has gone wrong, restoring to a former condition, whether mending broken nets (as in Mt 4:21, Mk 1:19), setting broken bones (as in secular Greek medical writings) or healing wounded hearts. The idea is to restore the person to usefulness to the Lord. In this context, one who is **spiritual** is one who is **gentle**, which clearly is one who is filled with/controlled by the Holy Spirit thus "bearing" this fruit (Eph 5:18-note, Gal 5:23)! Gentleness is [prautes](#) which denotes the humble and gentle attitude which expresses itself, in particular, in a patient submissiveness to offense, free from malice and desire for revenge... controlled strength, the ability to bear reproaches and slights without bitterness and resentment; the ability to provide a soothing influence on someone who is in a state of anger, bitterness and resentment against life... the word indicates an obedient submissiveness to God and His will, with unwavering faith and enduring patience displaying itself in a gentle attitude and kind acts toward others, and this often in the face of opposition.

"This word (**repent**) was the message of the Baptist, of Jesus, of Peter, of Paul, this radical change of attitude and life." (Robertson)

The question arises what if they don't repent? Do we still need to forgive them?

**Steven Cole** addresses this writing that "While biblical forgiveness is a quick decision, the restoration of trust usually takes time proportionate to the seriousness of the offense. If a man molests your children and truly repents, you must forgive him, but you would be foolish to let him babysit your children. Trust is gradually restored as a person demonstrates growth in godliness. Also, granting forgiveness does not necessarily mean removing all of the consequences of the person's wrongful actions. God forgave David, but He imposed heavy consequences for his sin so that he and others would see the seriousness of what he had done (2

Sam. 12:14). Granting forgiveness may include graciously relieving the offender of some or all the consequences, but not necessarily so. As a boss, you may forgive a dishonest employee, and yet put him on probation or fire him. Also, many wonder, "Should I forgive the person if he does not repent or if he only repents superficially?" Is forgiveness supposed to be unconditional? We are to forgive others as God in Christ has forgiven us (Eph. 4:32). God does not pardon our sins until we repent, but He made provision to pardon our sins long before we repented and He acted in kindness toward us to lead us to repentance (Rom. 2:4). Thus we must root out all bitterness toward the person who has sinned against us and genuinely seek his welfare by our attitudes, words, and actions. We should pray for his repentance. We should look for opportunities to do kind things for him. The minute he repents and asks our forgiveness, we should freely grant it. That's how God forgave us in Christ, bearing the penalty for our sin." ([Luke 17:1-4 Relational Sins and How to Deal With Them](#))

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**Be on your guard!** (4337)([prosecho](#) from **pros** = before, toward + **echo** = hold) means literally to hold to, toward or before. Originally it was followed by the word "the mind" (nous) but at times "the mind" was omitted but still the idea of "the mind" was implied. In short prosecho describes holding one's mind to someone or something. The idea is to give heed, be concerned about, be careful.

Jesus had used this same warning in Luke 12:1-note - "'**Beware** of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." He uses prosecho two more times in Luke and all 3 of these uses are in the [present imperative](#), calling for our continued attention to folks that might cause us to stumble. I received an email this morning from a saint who was being stumbled by some "Torah" teachers who emphasized obedience and disavowed the Trinity, causing considerable distress to this young believer. Woe to those who do this!

Luke 20:46 "**Beware** of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love respectful greetings in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets,

Luke 21:34 "**Be on guard**, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap;

Luke recorded a similar warning in Acts from Paul to the elders at Ephesus

Acts 20:28 "**Be on guard** for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Paul warned Timothy not to "**pay attention** (prosecho) to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith." (1 Ti 1:4)

Paul used **prosecho** in Titus 1:14 warning Titus to not be "**paying attention** to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth."

**Prosecho** is used in a positive context of those thing to which we should pay attention - 1 Ti 4:13, Heb 2:1, 2 Peter 1:19.

**Prosecho** means to moor a ship, to tie it up. **Prosecho** was also used to mean "to remain on course". Figuratively (see also below) the idea is to hold one's mind before then to take heed, to pay attention, to give heed, be in a state of alert, to watch out for or to be on guard. The word implies the giving one's consent, as well as one's attention. When used in this manner **prosecho** always warns of some type of danger (usually spiritual danger but occasionally physical)! **Prosecho** is not a call simply to notice or sense something, but to be on guard against it because it is so harmful (eg, the danger of practicing your righteousness for others to see, the danger of false prophets, false teachers and false teaching, the danger of the Pharisees and Sadducees). The idea is to turn one's mind or attention to a thing by being on one's guard against it.

**Sins** (verb) (264)([hamartano](#)) literally means to miss the mark (and so not share in the prize). Hamartano means to act contrary to the will and law of God. To commit a wrong. To be in error. **Hamartano** means to **err** (err is from Latin **errare** = to wander or to stray!) which means to wander from the right way, to deviate from the true course or purpose and so to violate an accepted standard of conduct. To err is to miss the right way. To **err** means to deviate from the path or line of duty. To stray by design or mistake. To **err** is to stray from God and/or His commandments. **Hamartano** means to swerve from the truth, to turn aside from the straight course charted by the Word of Truth. To **swerve** means to wander from any line prescribed, or from a rule of duty; to depart from what is established by law, duty or custom.

**Rebuke** ([aorist imperative](#) = Do it now! Do not delay!) (2008)([epitimao](#) from **epi** = upon + **timao** = to honor) means literally to put honor upon and then to mete out due measure and so then to find fault with, to censure severely, to rebuke, to express strong disapproval of, or to denounce (cp the incredible example in Mt 16:22). **Wuest** adds that **epitimao** "In classical Greek its predominating sense is that of severe, strenuous reproach for unworthy deeds or acts. In this sense, the word carries at bottom, a suggestion of a charge under penalty." **Cleon Rogers** says that **epitimao** "has the nuance of a frank, but gentle admonition: politely

tell him that he is wrong. This is to be done instead of harboring a grudge."

Luke's uses of **epitimaō** - Lk. 4:35; Lk. 4:39; Lk. 4:41; Lk. 8:24; Lk. 9:21; Lk. 9:42; Lk. 9:55; Lk. 17:3; Lk. 18:15; Lk. 18:39; Lk. 19:39; Lk. 23:40

**Repents** (3340) (**metanoō** from **meta** = with, among + **noeo** = to think, exercise the mind <> from **nous** = mind - see study = **metanoia**) means to have another mind. **Metanoō** means to change one's mind in respect to sin, God, and self. To turn to God and from sin (Luke 15:7 = "one sinner who **repents**", 10, cf 1Th 1:9-note). It is not an intellectual decision but a change of mind that issues in a change of behavior. This change of mind may, especially in the case of Christians who have fallen into sin, be preceded by sorrow (2Cor 7:8, 9, 10, 11); but sorrow for sin, though it may cause repentance, is not repentance.

**Forgive** (**arist imperative** = Do it now! Do not delay!) (863) (**aphiemi** from **apo** = prefix implies separation + **hiemi** = put in motion, send; See noun **aphesis**) conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation and means to send from one's self, to forsake, to hurl away, to put away, let alone, disregard, put off. It conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation and refers to total detachment, total separation, from a previous location or condition. It means to send forth or away from one's self. It refers to the act of putting something away or of laying it aside. In secular Greek **aphiemi** initially conveyed the sense of to throw and in one secular writing we read "let the pot drop" (**aphiemi**). From this early literal use the word came to mean leave or let go.

The **arist imperative** calls for a specific act which is complete, but the completed act may be repeated, if necessary (as shown by the following context).

**Mattoon on aphiemi** - This word means:

- To expire: The offense of the person has expired.
- To let go or to keep no longer: Bitterness and hurt are released when you forgive. You let these things go.
- To not discuss a matter now: The issue is dropped.
- To go away, leaving something behind: You walk away from the offense.
- To forsake a matter and leave it alone: ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

We are never more like God than when we forgive the sin of others. And note this is a command in to do this without delay. The only way to truly obey/keep this command is by jettisoning our natural reaction (which is not to forgive) and to rely wholly on the Holy Spirit to give us the desire and the power to forgive (cf Php 2:13NLT-note).

**NET Note** - Forgiveness is to be readily given and not withheld. In a community that is to have restored relationships, grudges are not beneficial.

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**Steven Cole** has a lengthy practical comment on the delicate practice of rebuking another person -

In my experience of helping people work through relational conflicts, this step is often neglected completely out of cowardice or done poorly at best. People would sooner walk away from a strained relationship than to give biblical rebuke to the person who is sinning against them or against others. Or, quite often if someone sins against us, we go and tell others about it, "just so they can pray about it" or "to get their counsel." Sure! Jesus clearly says, "If your brother sins (against you is implied), rebuke him." Let's face it, it's not pleasant to have to rebuke someone. If you find it pleasant, you are not in the right frame of mind to do it and you will probably do it in an ungodly manner! But the command to rebuke a sinning brother is the first step in the restoration process. You are not dealing with him biblically until you do it. This does not mean that we are to go around rebuking others for every minor offense. Often, both in the church and in our families, we should act "with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love (Eph. 4:2). "Love covers a multitude of sins" (1 Pet. 4:8). "We who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves" (Rom. 15:1). Thus much of the time we should simply absorb offences and pray for the offender, that he will grow up in the Lord and learn to be more sensitive to others. God has shown us grace; we should show grace to others.

So, how do we know when to bear with someone's sin and when to rebuke it? There are several things to consider (see [Ken Sande's excellent book, The Peacemaker \[Baker\], pp. 135-140](#)):

**First**, are you aware that the offender has something against you? If so, Jesus commands us to go to him and seek to get the matter cleared up (Matt. 5:23-24). We can't shrug it off by saying, "That's his problem!" Scripture repeatedly tells us to pursue peace with others (Rom. 12:18; 14:19; 2 Tim. 2:22; Heb. 12:14). In other words, we are not to be passive about strained relationships. To be apathetic is not to love the other person. We should ardently go after peace.

**Second**, is the other person's sin bringing dishonor to God? If someone who professes to be a Christian is acting in a way that brings shame to the name of Christ, and you know the person and are aware of his behavior, you're it! You need to go and talk to him about his sin in an attempt to bring him to repentance. To let it go is not to care about the Lord's glory or your brother's holiness.

**Third**, is the other person's sin damaging your relationship with him (or her)? Perhaps the other person habitually gossips about others, so that you find yourself wanting to avoid being around her (or him). You don't have to become best of friends, but the loving thing to do is not to avoid her, but to attempt to help her face up to her sin and repent. Or, perhaps the person said or did something that hurt you, so that you find yourself dodging him every time you see him. Again, the loving thing to do is to meet privately and confront what he did so that you help him grow as a believer.

**Fourth**, is the other person's sin seriously hurting others? Perhaps you see a young mother who verbally or physically abuses her children. Or it maybe a professing Christian is ensnared in drug or alcohol abuse, along with the inevitable deception that accompanies those sins. You are not showing God's love to let the person go on in this destructive behavior. You must rebuke with the view of leading the person to repentance.

**Fifth**, is the other person's sin seriously hurting himself? If you see a Christian engaging in some sin that is going to destroy him and you shrug and say, "That's his problem," you are not loving your brother. As James 5:19-20 says, "My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back; let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins."

**Finally**, is the person's sin an often repeated pattern? If a person does the same thing over and over, he is enslaved to that sin and needs help getting out of it. Anger, lust, greed, selfishness, insensitivity to others, laziness or a lack of self-discipline, and many other sins can destroy a person's faith if he does not get the victory in Christ. If you see these habit patterns, you need to come alongside and offer help in the Lord.

**Do not go to rebuke another believer until you first have examined yourself and taken the log out of your own eye.** (Mt 7:1-5 [note](#)) Check your motives before God, to make sure that your desire is to do His will. Pray for the other person's openness and for the right timing to go. Prepare yourself to act in love even if the other person attacks you. But then, be obedient to God's Word and go. It is always more difficult at the moment to go than to let it go. But biblical love demands that we put out the effort. ([Luke 17:1-4 Relational Sins and How to Deal With Them](#))

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**ILLUSTRATION** - In the March, 2002 issue of Reader's Digest, Fred Luskin, a psychologist from Stanford University says, "Holding on to hurts and nursing grudges wears you down physically and emotionally. Forgiving someone can be a powerful antidote."

Charlotte van Oyden Witvliet concurs with him. She is an assistant professor of Psychology at Hope College in Holland, Michigan, who conducted a study with 71 volunteers that showed people who don't forgive, experience "steep spikes in blood pressure, heart rate and muscle tension." Forgiveness, Witvliet found, helps people to remain calm. "Forgiveness isn't about condoning what happened," Luskin said, "It is about breaking free from the person who wronged us."

For example, in 1982, Stephen Watt was a sheriff's officer with the misfortune of pulling Mark Farnham over in a routine traffic stop. What he didn't know is that Farnham was speeding for a reason. He had just robbed a bank. Farnham shot Watt five times, and left him for dead. Mr. Watt recovered, but lost the sight in one eye, and still carries a bullet near his spine.<sup>277</sup>

As you might expect, Watt became bitter towards Farnham. His anger grew until his wife intervened. She encouraged him to forgive his assailant, if he was ever going to be a true Christian.

In 1986, Watt attended a revival service at the prison and spotted Farnham across the room. He walked over to Farnham and hugged him. Watt says, "I had basically been dead from the time I got shot in 1982 until 1986."

When he forgave Farnham, Watt says, "It was just like God picked up a semi-truck right off me and I actually started living." From all appearances, the forgiveness was complete; today the two men are best friends. Beloved, forgiveness is needed by the offender and the offended. (Mattoon [Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**Luke 17:4 "And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him."**

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**KJV Luke 17:4** And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to



thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

- **if he sins against you seven times a day** Matthew 18:21,22,35; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Ephesians 4:31,32; Colossians 3:12,13
- **I repent,' forgive him** Matthew 5:44; 6:12,14,15; 18:16; Romans 12:20; 2 Thessalonians 3:13,14
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:1-4 Relational Sins and How to Deal With Them](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:3-4 Four Hallmarks of Humility, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

## FORGIVENESS WITHOUT LIMIT SHOULD MARK A DISCIPLE

**And if he sins ([hamartano](#)) against you seven times a day, and returns ([epistrepho](#)) to you seven times, saying, 'I repent ([metanoeo](#)),' forgive ([aphiemi](#)) him** - Notice that even the verb **returns** ([epistrepho](#)) gives a picture of the person's willingness to repent. **IF** is third class condition which speaks of a potential action, indicating it is possible that this scenario of repeated sin against you could occur. And yet sin seven times is to be "repaid" with forgiveness seven times! Isn't this what God does for us every day? Of course it is, so we are never more like Christ then when we forgive those who wrong us just as He did even from the Cross (Lk 23:34+). Seven times speaks of "perfect" forgiveness, complete forgiveness, "supernatural" forgiveness, like God gives us daily! Only a Spirit filled disciple (Eph 5:18+) can forgive this way. Are you fighting forgiveness with someone (unforgiveness is sin)? Yield to the conviction of the sweet Spirit and allow Him give you the desire/will to forgive and the supernatural power to truly forgive! (Php 2:13NLT+).

**THOUGHT** - Do you have a problem with forgiveness? Is the Spirit bringing to your mind just now as you read this that there is someone you are not willing to forgive? If you are a follower of Christ, you need to give careful heed to Jesus' exhortation regarding forgiveness. In a word Jesus is saying "*Go overboard on forgiveness!*" Don't hold back. Followers of Christ are "*extravagant*" forgivers! If there is even a hint the person (who has offended you) is repentant, don't question his/her motives. Just forgive, forgive, forgive, forgive, forgive, forgive, and forgive again! If you are a believer, there should NEVER be a time in your life when you say something like "That's it! I'll never forgive them again even if they come crawling on all fours!" God is a forgiving God and His children should imitate Him (Eph 5:1+)! What if we sinned and confessed our sin according to 1 John 1:9 and the offended party says "Sorry, that was one time too many. I can't forgive you this time!" Of course that is hypothetical, because the Father is always open to the sincere confession of His children! And be careful, lest in your forgiving the other person, you do it with a judgmental spirit. Genuine forgiveness is not judgmental! Forgiveness is to be granted whenever it is requested! Does that describe your walk with Christ? If not, ask God to forgive you. Then filled with Spirit (Eph 5:18+ -- the Holy Spirit is grieved by an "unholy spirit" of unforgiveness) go forth and forgive seven times, yea, even "seventy times seven" if necessary! (cf Mt 18:22).

**Seven** emphasizes completeness so just as the sin is "complete" so too must be the forgiveness. Clearly this was a lesson that Jesus needed to repeat for in Luke 18 we see the interchange between Peter and Jesus...

Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus \*said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. (Lk 18:21,22)

**Barclay** - The Rabbis had a saying that if one forgave another *three* times, one was perfect. The Christian standard takes the Rabbinic standard, doubles it and adds one; but it is not a matter of calculation. It simply means that the Christian standard of forgiveness must immeasurably exceed the best the world can achieve. ([Luke 18 Commentary - Daily Study Bible](#))

**Spurgeon** - Do you say, "That is too many times in a day to forgive him"? Let me ask,—"How many times in a day have you sinned? How many times in a day does God forgive you?" Ah! the seven times a day that you have to forgive your brother are but a small number compared with the innumerable forgivenesses granted to you by our ever-gracious God....Perhaps someone remarks, "It looks as if he would do nothing else but keep on sinning and repenting." Well, suppose he does so, that is precisely what you are doing, except that you do not go often repent when you sin. So, possibly, the offender is rather better than you are, after all, and if God is gentle in his dealings with you, you may well be gentle in your dealings with your neighbor. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

Note that **forgive** is in the active voice which means that the subject (you or I) is the one initiating this action (forgiveness). The active voice signifies that it is a volitional choice, that you are making a choice of your will to forgive. Now I might add at this point, since it is not our "natural" inclination to forgive, a forgiving attitude in our hearts is best stimulated supernaturally by the Holy Spirit energizing us giving us the desire to forgive and the power to carry through with forgiving (cf Php 2:13NLT+). So yes, Biblical forgiveness is a decision (volitional choice) of one's will and is not a feeling. It is a decision optimally carried out by a man or woman



who is filled with (controlled by, empowered by) the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18+). Our [old man](#) (cf the [flesh](#)) is inherently selfish and not even able to genuinely forgive from the heart! The idea of forgiveness is to dismiss a case from court, to let go, to "drop the ax" (and "bury the hatchet" and not leave the handle visible!), to release from a debt (if they have sinned against us they have a "sin debt"). The best way to dismiss a case from court is to allow the Spirit to "serve as Judge" so to speak. Then enabled by the Spirit you can choose to let the matter drop and you can sincerely promise not to bring it up against the person in the future. Biblical forgiveness does not say, "I forgive you but I never want to see your stinking face again!" That's the "genre" of forgiveness the lost, godless world gives, a forgiveness "empowered" by our "stinking [flesh](#)." Biblical forgiveness opens the way to restore wounded relationships. Reconciliation is the goal of forgiveness.

Paul also emphasizes the importance of followers of Christ manifesting an attitude of forgiveness...

Ephesians 4:31,32+ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander **be put away** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) from you, along with all malice. **Be** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) kind to one another, tender-hearted, **forgiving** (present tense see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to make this our habitual practice](#)) **each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.**

Colossians 3:12,13+ So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and **forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.**

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**Returns** (1994) ([epistrepho](#) from [epí](#) = motion toward + [strepho](#) = twist, turn quite around or reverse) means to revert, to turn about, to turn around, to turn toward, to return. In this context it speaks of a physical change (they literally turn around and return) and a moral change (they have a change of mind). **Friberg** - (1) intransitively, active and middle with aorist passive; (a) literally, of physical movement - turn around, turn (about) (Jn 21:20); return, turn back (Acts 15:36); (b) figuratively, of religious or moral change -- change one's ways, **repent** (Mk 4:12); of a change of mind or course of action come to believe again in, turn back to, return to (Lk 17:4; Gal 4:9); (2) transitively, of religious or moral change turn, bring back, cause to change (Jas 5:19, 20) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Epistrepho** - 35v - **back(2), back\*(3), return(6), returned(3), returns(2), take back(1), turn(8), turn back(1), turned(6), turned again(1), turned around(1), turning(2), turning around(2), turns(2), turns...back(1).** Matt. 10:13; Matt. 12:44; Matt. 13:15; Matt. 24:18; Mk. 4:12; Mk. 5:30; Mk. 8:33; Mk. 13:16; Lk. 1:16; Lk. 1:17; Lk. 2:39; Lk. 8:55; Lk. 17:4; Lk. 17:31; Lk. 22:32; Jn. 21:20; Acts 3:19; Acts 9:35; Acts 9:40; Acts 11:21; Acts 14:15; Acts 15:19; Acts 15:36; Acts 16:18; Acts 26:18; Acts 26:20; Acts 28:27; 2 Co. 3:16; Gal. 4:9; 1 Thess. 1:9; Jas. 5:19; Jas. 5:20; 1 Pet. 2:25; 2 Pet. 2:22; Rev. 1:12

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## Forgiving Clubs

Read: Luke 17:1-10

If he sins against you seven times in a day, and . . . returns to you, saying, "I repent," you shall forgive him. — Luke 17:4

If you play golf, you know how important it is to hit the ball at just the right spot on the club face. The newest clubs, however, are more forgiving. The metal-head woods, the featherweight clubs, and the hollowback irons have expanded what is often referred to as the "sweet spot" on the club. Now it is possible to hit the ball on the heel or the toe of the club and still get good distance.

The idea of a golf club that has a large and forgiving "sweet spot" reminds me of how Christians should respond to one another. Instead of being like the old, unforgiving club that required near-perfect performance, we should be like the new clubs that are generous with the faults of the golfer. We should have a large "sweet spot" that provides plenty of room to forgive any repentant brother or sister in Christ (Lk. 17:4).

That's the pattern the Lord Jesus set for us. In fact, He came to earth to die for our sins and to show us, by what He said and did, what forgiveness really means. During His life, and even on the cross, He forgave all who called to Him in faith. We should follow His example. Who should be more forgiving than those of us who have needed and experienced so much forgiveness ourselves? By Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Forgiveness—it's a gift from God

That we should spread around;

So give it to repentant ones

Wherever they are found.

—JDB

We can stop forgiving others only if Christ stops forgiving us.

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**Steven Cole** concludes his sermon on Luke 17:1-4 writing that "Former First Lady, Barbara Bush, spoke these words at a college commencement:

As important as your obligation as a doctor, a lawyer, or a business leader will be, you are a human being first, and those human connections with spouses, with children, with friends are the most important investments you will ever make. At the end of your life, you will never regret not having passed one more test, winning one more verdict, closing one more deal. You will regret time not spent with a husband, a child, a friend or a parent. Our success as a society depends not on what happens in the White House but on what happens inside your house. (Reader's Digest [1/91], pp. 157-158.)

Relationships are important to us. But even more so, they matter to God! That's why Jesus warns so strongly about being on guard against relational sins and emphasizes so strongly the need for rebuke, repentance, and forgiveness. If you have a strained relationship with a family member, a fellow Christian, or even with a non-Christian, I urge you, so far as it depends on you, to pursue peace and reconciliation. God will bless you as you seek to obey Him.

#### Discussion Questions

1. How can we fight our inherent tendency to blame others?
  2. In marriage, how can a husband and wife confront one another's sins without becoming adversaries?
  3. Do we have any right to talk to someone else about a person's sin against us before we have talked to the person himself? If so, when and under what conditions?
  4. What are some practical implications of the fact that forgiveness is a decision, not a feeling?
  5. Discuss: Should we forgive a person who does not repent or who repents in a glib or superficial manner?
- ([Luke 17:1-4 Relational Sins and How to Deal With Them](#))

#### Luke 17:5 The apostles said to the Lord, "**Increase** our faith!"

**KJV Luke 17:5** And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

- **Increase our faith** Mark 9:24; 2 Corinthians 12:8-10; Philippians 4:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 1:22,23
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:5-10 More Faith or More Obedience?](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:5-10 Four Hallmarks of Humility, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passage:

Mark 9:24+ Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief."

### SUPERCARGE OUR FAITH!

Why do they ask a faith increase? What has Jesus clearly stated? He has told them they must be faithful forgivers! Oh, how difficult is to forgive those who have sinned against us! So they ask for a boost to their faith, that they might believe and obey His exhortation.

The **apostles** ([apostolos](#)) said to the Lord, "**Increase** ([prostithemi](#) in [aorist imperative](#) expresses their sense of urgency and great need) **our faith** ([pistos](#))!" - The **apostles** identifies the 12 men chosen by Jesus. The "disciples" in Lk 17:1 would have included apostles and others who were disciples (some believing and others interested by not yet believing). **Increase our faith** was in the form of a command to give them more faith, but Jesus will correct them. They were not asking a gift of faith, but an increase in the depth of their faith.

The **apostles** are the 12 disciples (learners) who Jesus called personally and sovereignly to be in His inner circle, a group of men including one betrayer, Judas Iscariot (Mt 10:2-4, Lk 6:13+, cf Rev 21:14). These were

to be His personal representatives after His ascension. The apostles were eyewitnesses of His resurrection, and composed the foundation upon which the church was built (Eph. 2:20), as well as Spirit-inspired authors of most of the New Testament.

**Steven Cole** on **increase our faith** - The disciples instantly realized that these were tough demands. To walk uprightly so as not to cause a new believer to stumble and to forgive someone who has wronged us are not automatic behaviors! Forgiveness especially is tough because our feelings are involved. So the disciples respond by asking the Lord to increase their faith (Lk 17:5). It was an honest request stemming from the right motives. They saw that if they wanted to fulfill these demands, they would have to have God's strength and enabling to do it. But Jesus' answer (Lk 17:6) indicates that more faith is not really the issue. Faith is not measured by its quantity, but simply by its presence. A mustard seed sized faith will accomplish impossible things. The real need, Jesus says (Lk 17:7-10), is for more obedience and humility. We should view ourselves as God's slaves who owe Him simple and unquestioning obedience. And, when we have done what He requires, we should not get puffed up with pride in our great obedience, but should simply say, "We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done." ([More Faith or More Obedience](#))

**John MacArthur** says that **increase our faith** "was a humble, honest admission of weakness on their part. The Greek verb translated **increase** means "to add to," "supplement," "develop," or "grow." They were not denying that they possessed faith, but doubted that it was sufficiently strong. What Jesus demanded in this context seemed to them to be an impossible standard to live up to. It was completely contrary to what they had been taught by the religious leaders. Like the apostles, humble people are quick to recognize their own inadequacy. "Who is adequate for these things?" the apostle Paul asked rhetorically (2 Cor. 2:16; cf. 3:5). His adequacy came from a humble dependence on God's all-sufficient grace (2 Cor. 12:9; cf. 4:7-12), which empowered him to "labor, striving according to His power, which mightily work[ed] within [him]" (Col. 1:29; cf. 1 Cor. 2:1-5; 15:10)." (See [The MacArthur Commentary](#))

**Brian Bell** - The demands of discipleship are great (**ED: I WOULD GO SO FAR AS TO SAY THEY ARE IN FACT IMPOSSIBLE...IN RELIANCE ON OUR OWN RESOLVE, OUR NATURAL FLESHY POWER!**). The disciples recognized they needed divine help to fulfill such demands. No wonder the disciples cried out to Jesus, "if we have to live like that with people, then, Lord, increase our faith!" You would expect the disciples to say, "Increase our love!" But forgiveness comes from faith in God's Word. A grenade doesn't ask for "more power" it just says, "pull the pin"! To make an Atomic Bomb you don't need bigger atoms, just to split them!

**Allen** reasons that "To relate to others on the terms laid down by Jesus is beyond human capacity. A mere man needs faith to rise above the usual patterns of human relations." (Broadman Bible Commentary – Luke-John) I would agree with Allen and add (AS WITH BELL'S COMMENT) such "infinite" forgiveness is **impossible**, but it is **Him-possible**. It is in fact really only possible as we are energized (given the desire and the power - Phil 2:13NLT+) by the Spirit to follow through and forgive.

**Spurgeon** - For this kind of patient forgiving seemed too much for them, unless they had a larger stock of faith; and therein they were right. Strength of faith gives strength of love, and strength of love makes forgiveness easy....They seemed so struck with the severity of this command that they asked for more faith that they might be able to obey it. And, dear friends, that is always the best thing to do. Do not refuse obedience to the Lord's precept, but say, "Lord, increase my faith that I may be able to obey it. It can be done, or else thou wouldst not have given me the command. I cannot do it as I am without an increase of strength, therefore, as faith is the medium by which strength is received, Lord, increase my faith." ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Norman Crawford** - They are not asking for initial **faith** in Christ but for a working **faith** in which to serve Him acceptably. **Faith** is a very small thing and the size of it is far less important than its object. It never stands alone and has value only in the degree that its object has value. Strong faith in an unreliable person produces nothing but disappointment. But faith in Christ and His promises can never lead to disappointment because He said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt 24:35). Only twice did the Lord credit a person with "great faith". The first was when the Syrophenician woman took the lowest place (Matt 15:28), and the second was when the centurion gave to the Lord Jesus the highest place (Luke 7:9), so great faith cannot be determined by worldly standards of greatness. ([What the Bible teaches – Luke](#))

**Mattoon** - Faith is not measured by its bigness or by its smallness. What is needed in us is a living, active faith or a faith that is in the Lord Himself and in His indwelling Holy Spirit. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**Apostles** (652)([apostolos](#) from verb **apostello** - from **apo** = from + **stello** = withdraw from) means a sending forth, sending off, sending away, a dispatching. In secular Greek it was used of an expedition. The related noun **apostolos** was a technical word designating an individual sent from someone else with the sender's commission, the necessary credentials, the sender's authority and the implicit responsibility to accomplish a mission or assignment. In a word an apostle is a "sent one!" See discussion of **apostles** in note on Luke 6:13.

All of Luke's uses of **apostolos** - Lk. 6:13-note; Lk. 9:10; Lk. 11:49; Lk. 17:5; Lk. 22:14; Lk. 24:10; Acts 1:2;

Acts 1:26; Acts 2:37; Acts 2:42; Acts 2:43; Acts 4:33; Acts 4:35; Acts 4:36; Acts 4:37; Acts 5:2; Acts 5:12; Acts 5:18; Acts 5:29; Acts 5:40; Acts 6:6; Acts 8:1; Acts 8:14; Acts 8:18; Acts 9:27; Acts 11:1; Acts 14:4; Acts 14:14; Acts 15:2; Acts 15:4; Acts 15:6; Acts 15:22; Acts 15:23; Acts 16:4

#### Related Resources: All From Gotquestions...

- [Luke 6:13-16 Who were the twelve \(12\) disciples / apostles of Jesus Christ?](#)
- [Does the Bible record the death of the apostles? How did each of the apostles die?](#)
- [Who were the 70 \(or 72\) disciples in Luke 10?](#)
- [Was Matthias or Paul God's choice to replace Judas as the 12th apostle?](#)
- [What is an apostle?](#)
- [What are the biblical qualifications for apostleship?](#)

**Lord** (master, owner)(2962)(**kurios** from **kuros** = might or power, related to **kuroo** = to give authority) primarily means the possessor, owner, master, the supreme one, one who is sovereign and possesses absolute authority, absolute ownership and uncontested power. **Kurios** is used of the one to whom a person or thing belonged, over which he has the power of deciding, the one who is the master or disposer of a thing (Mk 7:28). **lord, Lord, master**—1. generally—a. owner, master Mt 6:24; 20:8; 24:48; Lk 12:46; 19:33; Jn 13:16; Ro 14:4; Gal 4:1; lord, master, one who has full control of something Mt 9:38; Mk 2:28.—b. as a respectful designation used in addressing persons of varying social or political rank, often equivalent to our sir Mt 27:63; Jn 12:21; Ac 16:30; Rev 7:14. (My) master 1 Pe 3:6.—2. in specialized usage—a. as a designation of God Mt 5:33; Mk 12:29f; Lk 1:11, 15, 17, 32; 2:15, 22; Ac 7:31; 1 Ti 6:15; Heb 8:2; Jas 1:7; 2 Pet 2:9.—b. as a designation of the Roman emperor Ac 25:26.—c. as a designation of Jesus Christ, with emphasis on His authority and frequently in contrast to **doulos**. Because of the editorial interests of the Evangelists it is difficult to determine the precise level of social recognition or status awareness in reported dialogue. Mt 20:31; Mk 11:3; Lk 7:13; 10:1, 39, 41; Jn 20:18, 20, 28; Ac 2:36; 9:10f, 42; 10:36; Ro 1:4; 10:9; 12:11; 16:12; 1 Cor 4:17; 6:13f, 17; 11:23; Eph 6:8; Col 1:10; Philemon 25; Heb 2:3; 7:14; 1 Pe 1:3; 2 Pe 1:2; Rev 22:20.—d. In some passages it is not clear whether God or Christ is meant, e.g. 1 Cor 4:19; 7:17; 2 Cor 8:21; 1 Th 4:6; 2 Th 3:16.—e. as designation of a divine messenger Ac 10:4.—f. in general of beings or persons who elicit devotion appropriate to deity (deities) 1 Cor 8:5.

**Increase** (**arist imperative** = Do it now!)(4369)(**prostithemi** from **pros** = to or besides + **tithēmi** = to put) means to set, add, put, lay unto or with something. It involves increasing the substance rather than adding a new substance.

**Friberg** summaries **prostithemi** - (1) put to, add to; (a) as adding to what is already present (Mt 6.27); (b) as uniting people into a society already existing (Acts 2.41); (c) passive, as a Hebraism of one joining his forefathers through death be buried with, be laid away with, be gathered to (Acts 13.36); (2) provide, give, grant (Mt 6.33; Lk 17.5); (3) as a Hebraism denoting continuation or repetition when followed by an infinitive, literally add to do something, i.e. do again, do further (Lk 19.11); (4) as a Hebraism followed by an infinitive to mark an event that immediately follows proceed to do (Acts 12.3) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Gilbrant - Classical Greek** As a compound of the preposition **pros** and the verb **tithēmi**, **prostithēmi** has a diversity of meaning in classical usage depending upon the context. It can mean "give besides, to hand over, to impose upon, to add," and several others. **Prostithēmi** is widely used in classical literature. In the **Septuagint** **prostithēmi** is used to indicate giving birth (Ge 4:2, one being "added to" the family) and dying (Ge 25:8, being "added to" one's ancestors). There are many more obvious usages of adding something, such as men being added to a society, or God adding to their afflictions (cf Lev 26:18,21-note), etc. It also indicates something being done again (Ex 10:28; 11:6), i.e., in "addition to" the original. Apparently because of its connection with dying, it is occasionally used to indicate perishing or being destroyed (1 Samuel 26:10; 27:1). **New Testament usage** seems to be more concise than Septuagint usage, with **prostithēmi** being used primarily to indicate literally being added to (Matthew 6:27: "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?" NIV). Its use to indicate something being done again is also quite prominent (Luke 20:11,12; cf. 19:11). In the Parable of the Vineyard Jesus recounts how the owner repeatedly sent his servants to collect his rent. Several times in the Book of Acts, Luke used the Septuagint terminology of men being added to or included into a society (Acts 2:41,47), and in 13:36 he made use of the very common Septuagint meaning of dying when speaking of David's death. The idea of provision is found in Matthew 6:33 and Luke 12:31. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Prostithemi** - 18x in 18v - add(2), added(6), adding(1), brought(1), further be spoken(1), increase(1), laid(1), more will be given...besides(1), proceeded(3), went(1).

(Matthew 6:27) "And who of you by being worried can **add** a single hour to his life?

(Matthew 6:33) "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be **added** to you.

(Mark 4:24) And He was saying to them, "Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and **more will be given you besides**.

(Luke 3:20) Herod also **added** this to them all: he locked John up in prison.

(Luke 12:25) "And which of you by worrying can **add** a single hour to his life's span?"

(Luke 12:31) "But seek His kingdom, and these things will be **added** to you.

(Luke 17:5) The apostles said to the Lord, "**Increase** our faith!"

(Luke 19:11) While they were listening to these things, Jesus **went on** to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately.

(Luke 20:11) "And he **proceeded** to send another slave; and they beat him also and treated him shamefully and sent him away empty-handed.

(Luke 20:12) "And he **proceeded** to send a third; and this one also they wounded and cast out.

(Acts 2:41) So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were **added** about three thousand souls.

(Acts 2:47) praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was **adding** to their number day by day those who were being saved.

(Acts 5:14) And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly **added** to their number,

(Acts 11:24) for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And considerable numbers were **brought** to the Lord.

(Acts 12:3) When he saw that it pleased the Jews, he **proceeded** to arrest Peter also. Now it was during the days of Unleavened Bread.

(Acts 13:36) "For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and **was laid** among his fathers and underwent decay;

(Galatians 3:19) Why the Law then? It was **added** because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.

(Hebrews 12:19) and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no **further** word **be spoken** to them.

Prostitheimi 304x in 292v - Gen. 4:2,12; 8:12,21; 18:29; 25:1,8,17; 30:24; 35:29; 37:8; 38:5,26; 44:23; 49:29,33; Ex. 1:10; 5:7; 8:29; 9:28,34; 10:28; 11:6; 14:13; 23:2; 30:15; Lev. 5:16; 6:5; 19:14; 22:14; 26:18,21; 27:13,15,19,27,31; Num. 5:7; 11:25; 16:39; 18:2,4; 20:24,26; 22:15,19,25-26; 27:13; 31:2; 32:14-15; 36:3-4; Deut. 1:11; 3:26; 4:2; 5:22,25; 12:32; 13:4,11; 17:16; 18:16; 19:9,20; 20:8; 23:15; 25:3; 28:68; 32:50; Jos. 7:12; 14:8-9; 23:12-13; Jdg. 2:3,10,21; 3:12; 4:1; 8:28; 9:37; 10:6,13; 11:14; 13:1,21; 18:25; 20:22-23,28; Ruth 1:17; 1 Sam. 3:6,8,17,21; 7:13; 9:8; 12:19,25; 14:44; 15:6,35; 18:29; 19:8,21; 20:13,17; 23:4; 25:22; 26:10; 27:1,4; 2 Sam. 2:22,28; 3:9,35; 5:22; 7:10,20; 12:8; 14:10; 18:22; 19:13; 24:1,3,25; 1 Ki. 2:23; 10:7; 12:11,14; 16:33; 19:2; 20:10; 2 Ki. 1:11,13; 6:23,31; 19:30; 20:6; 21:8; 22:20; 24:7; 1 Chr. 14:13; 17:9,18; 21:3; 22:14; 2 Chr. 9:6; 10:11,14; 15:9; 28:13,22; 33:8; 34:28; Ezr. 10:10; Neh. 13:18; Est. 8:3; 9:27; Job 13:9; 20:9; 27:1,19; 29:1,22; 32:13; 34:32,37; 36:1; 40:5; Ps. 10:18; 41:8; 61:6; 62:10; 69:26-27; 71:14; 77:7; 78:17; 89:22; 115:14; 120:3; Prov. 3:2; 9:9,11,18; 10:22,27; 19:4,19; 30:6; Eccl. 1:16,18; 2:9,26; 3:14; Isa. 1:5,13; 7:10; 8:5; 10:20; 11:11; 14:1; 23:12; 26:15; 29:14; 30:1; 38:5; 47:1; 50:4; 51:22; 52:1; Jer. 36:32; 45:3; Lam. 4:15-16,22; Ezek. 23:14; 36:12; 37:16; Dan. 4:36; 6:28; 10:18; 11:34; Hos. 1:6; 9:15; 13:2; Joel 2:2; Amos 3:15; 5:2; 7:8,13; 8:2; Jon. 2:4; Nah. 1:15; Zeph. 3:11; Zech. 14:17;

**Faith** (4102)(**pistis** cf **pistos** = adjective, **pisteuo** = verb) is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything. As **pistis** relates to God, it is the conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things well as the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ. As faith relates to Christ it represents a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through Whom we obtain eternal salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. Stated another way, eternal salvation comes **only** through belief in Jesus Christ and no other way.

**Pistos in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 5:20; Lk. 7:9; Lk. 7:50; Lk. 8:25; Lk. 8:48; Lk. 17:5; Lk. 17:6; Lk. 17:19; Lk. 18:8; Lk. 18:42; Lk. 22:32; Acts 3:16; Acts 6:5; Acts 6:7; Acts 11:24; Acts 13:8; Acts 14:9; Acts 14:22; Acts 14:27; Acts 15:9; Acts 16:5; Acts 17:31; Acts 20:21; Acts 24:24; Acts 26:18;

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## Crisis Of Faith

Read: Luke 17:1-6

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." —Luke 17:5

Millions of people are afraid to travel by air. Many of them know very well what the statistics say—that they are safer in an airplane than in the family car, or even in the bathtub. But that doesn't matter. Researchers say that a conscious fear of crashing is usually not the problem. The real root of their anxiety is the fear that they will lose control of their lives once they leave the ground.

A similar crisis of faith may occur when a person puts himself in the care of God. He too is carried a long way from what the world considers "solid ground." Trusting an invisible Lord can be frightening, especially for a new Christian.

Jesus' disciples experienced such a crisis of faith when He told them that they would have to rise to levels of forgiveness and mercy previously unknown to them (Luke 17:3-5). Yet He responded to their lack of faith by pointing out that it takes only a small amount of obedient trust in Him to put the power of heaven at their disposal (Lk 17:6). That's the key to our journey through life. When we learn what Christ wants from us, we must take the first step of obedience. He will then give us the strength to do what He wants us to do. Lord, increase our faith. —By Mart DeHaan II ([Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by



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If you would know the power of God,  
Just take Him at His Word;  
Be not dismayed if faith is small,  
But trust "Thus saith the Lord." —D. De Haan

A little faith can dispel big fears.

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**John Piper comments** on how [Jesus Helped His Disciples Increase Their Faith](#) (Lu 17:5-10): In Lu 17:5 the apostles ask Jesus to **increase** their **faith**. How does Jesus help them? In two ways, both of which are by telling them truth. So even in the way He responds he shows us that faith comes by hearing. Knowing certain things should increase our faith.

1. First, He strengthens our faith by telling us in v6 that the crucial issue in accomplishing great things to advance the kingdom of God is not the *quantity* of our faith, but the *power* of God. He says, **'If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea'; and it would obey you.'** By referring to the tiny mustard seed after being asked about increased faith, He deflects attention away from the *quantity* of faith to the *object* of faith. God moves mulberry trees. And it does not depend decisively on the *quantity* of our faith, but on His power and wisdom and love. In knowing this we are helped not to worry about our faith and are inspired to trust God's free initiative and power.

2. Second, He helps their faith grow by telling them in Lk 17:7-10 that when they have done all they are commanded to do, they are still radically dependent on grace. Jesus gives an illustration. You might want to read it again in v7-10. The gist of it is that **the owner of a slave does not become a debtor to the slave no matter how much work the slave does**. The meaning is that God is never our debtor. V10 sums it up: **"So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done.'**" We are always his debtor. And we will never be able to pay this debt, nor are we ever meant to. We will always be dependent on grace. We will never work our way up out of debt to a place where God is in our debt. "Who has ever given a gift to him that he should be repaid?" (Ro 11:35).

When it says in v9 that the owner does not **"thank"** the slave, the idiom for **"thank"** is provocative. I think the idea is that "thanks" is a response to grace. The reason the owner does not thank the slave is that the servant is not giving the owner more than what the owner deserves. He is not treating the owner with grace. Grace is being treated better than you deserve. So it is with us in relation to God. We never treat God with grace. We never give him more than he deserves. Which means that he never owes us thanks. God never says "Thank you" to us. Instead he is always giving us more than what we deserve and we are always owing him thanks. So the lesson for us is that when we have done all we should do - when we have solved all our pastoral care problems and fixed the attitudes of all our people and mobilized the most missions and loved the poor and saved marriages and reared godly children and boldly proclaimed Christ - **God owes us no thanks**. Instead we will at that moment relate to Him as **debtors to grace** just as we do now. This is a great encouragement to faith. Why? Because it means that God is just as free to bless us before we get our act together as he is after. Since we are "unworthy" slaves before we have done what we should, and "unworthy" slaves afterwards as well, it is only grace that would prompt God to help us. Therefore he is free to help us before and after. This is a great incentive to trust him for help when we feel like our act is not together.

So two things increase our faith: 1) that God himself and not the quantity of our faith is the decisive factor in flinging mulberry trees out of the way; and 2) free grace is decisive in how God treats us before and after we have done all we ought to do. We never move beyond the need for grace. Therefore let us trust God for great things in our little faith, and let us not be paralyzed by what is left to be done in our lives and in our church.

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**Luke 17:6 And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea'; and it would obey you.**

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**KJV Luke 17:6** And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

- **If you had faith** Matthew 17:20,21; 21:21; Mark 9:23; 11:22,23; 1 Corinthians 13:2
- **like a mustard seed** Luke 13:19; Matthew 13:31,32
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:5-10 More Faith or More Obedience?](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:5-10 Four Hallmarks of Humility, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur



## Related Passages:

Luke 13:18-19+ So He was saying, "What is the **kingdom of God** like, and to what shall I compare it? 19 "It is like a **mustard seed**, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and THE BIRDS OF THE AIR NESTED IN ITS BRANCHES."

## FAITH - QUALITY NOT QUANTITY

The apostles assumed it would take great faith to enable great forgiveness (seven times). They were wrong. They were thinking QUANTITY of faith, but here Jesus turns their thoughts to the QUALITY of faith.

**And the Lord ([kurios](#)) said, "If you had faith ([pistos](#)) like a mustard seed - IF** is a first class condition indicating it is true that they did have "mustard seed" sized faith. **Like a mustard seed** is a term of comparison (a [simile](#)) comparing **faith** to **mustard seed**. A **mustard seed** was proverbial for its small size ([See picture](#)). [Wikipedia](#) says the seeds are usually about 1-2 mm diameter. Jesus is saying if you possessed even the smallest amount of **faith**, it would still be effective. In other words Jesus assumes that the apostles have some **faith**, even if it is quantitatively small. But that would be sufficient, because it was the quality of **faith**, not the quantity, that was important. In other words, the object of the **faith** was important. In other words small **faith** in a big God can move both trees and even mountains (Mt 17:20). Jesus is speaking figuratively, using hyperbole, to make His point about little faith. **Morris** agrees that "It is not so much great faith that is required as faith in a great God." (TNTC) **Criswell** adds "The verse is figuratively indicating that the power of faith is as unlimited as the power of God." ([Believer's Study Bible](#))

**John MacArthur** - Jesus' analogy calls for a faith that grows like a tiny **mustard seed** does into to a large shrub (mustard plants can reach fifteen feet in height). Those who possess such a **faith** can do amazing things, which the Lord pictured using another analogy. (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**Brian Bell** applies this little faith to the preceding context (forgiveness) - What is there in a grain of mustard seed that is distinctive? Life! Faith is like a seed: it seems small and weak, but it has life in it. If it is cultivated, it will grow and release power. If you have living faith (no matter how small) you will be able to forgive your brother seven times and you will see to it that you place no stumbling block in the way of others....It's not up to us to conjure up an increase of faith, but instead...Faith opens the way for God to act out of HIS limitless resources. Question - What do you need ripped out of your life trunk, limbs, and roots? Be pulled up by the roots.

**Mattoon** - Jesus tells them that just a small amount of genuine faith has nuclear power. Like a tiny seed, a small amount of genuine faith in God will take root and grow. The tiniest amount of faith can accomplish miraculous things. Faith is not measured by its bigness or by its smallness. What is needed in us is a living, active faith or a faith that is in the Lord Himself and in His indwelling Holy Spirit. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Spurgeon** - Now, if faith as a grain of mustard seed can do this, what cannot strong faith do? What a mercy it is for us that there is so much power in such little faith! A very small piece of dynamite can work great wonders; and within the tiniest morsel of faith, if it be no bigger than a grain of mustard seed, there lies concealed almost omnipotent force. Why do we not exercise that faith more? Nothing is impossible to him that believeth. We could blast the very strongholds of Satan with this powerful powder if we would but try it.....Meaning that anything and everything should be possible to our faith; but we need much more of it than the most of us have. Remember how holy Bernard says, "If thou hast a hard task, ask God to give thee a hard resolution." The diamond is difficult to cut, but it can be cut if you can find something harder. So, if there be a very difficult task set us, if we get faith that is more than equal to it, it will be accomplished. "With God all things are possible," which means not only that God can do all things, but that we also can do all things when God is with us. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**You would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea'; and it would obey you** - The KJV has "[sycamine tree](#)." In a parallel passage in Mt 17:20 Jesus substituted '**mountain**' for mulberry, but His point was the same that little faith in a big God can accomplish big things for God and it is God Who gets ALL the glory! Jesus describes two successive commands, both [aorist imperative](#) and [passive voice](#) (this is divine passive = indicates God is to perform the act). The "obedience" of the mulberry tree to these commands of course is a figurative description of what small faith in a big God can accomplish.

**TECHNICAL NOTE - Mulberry tree** (Greek sykaminos) - Most likely either a [white](#) or more likely a [black mulberry](#) tree is a deciduous fruit tree that grows about 20 ft (6 m) tall and has black juicy berries. It designates a large tree whose roots were very strong and was not to be planted within 37 feet of a cistern. The major point is that this tree has an extensive root system, so pulling it up would be a major operation. In fact the roots were regarded as so strong that it was virtually impossible to uproot. But not impossible for God and for

the one who taps into His great power with even a little faith!

**Morris** explains that "The rabbis held that the roots of the tree with this name would remain in the earth for 600 years (SB). Clearly it was very firmly rooted, so that removing it would be difficult. Jesus is not suggesting that his followers occupy themselves with pointless things like transferring trees into the sea. His concern is with the difficulty. He is saying that nothing is impossible to faith: 'genuine faith can accomplish what experience, reason, and probability would deny, if it is exercised within God's will' (Miller)." ([The Gospel According to St. Luke: An Introduction and Commentary](#) - borrow)

**MacArthur** - Jesus was not speaking of literally moving a tree; He was speaking metaphorically. The point is that those who trust Him will receive supernatural power to do what they could not do in their own human strength (cf. Mt. 17:20; Mk 11:23; Jn 14:12-14; 2Co 12:10; Ep 6:10). Humble people are powerful people because they understand their weakness and depend completely on "Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us" (Eph. 3:20). (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**NET Note** on **Be uprooted and be planted** - The passives here are probably a circumlocution for God performing the action (the so-called divine passive,). The issue is not the amount of faith....but its presence, which can accomplish impossible things. To cause a tree to be uprooted and planted in the sea is impossible. The expression is a rhetorical idiom. It is like saying a camel can go through the eye of a needle (Luke 18:25). **Would obey** "is aorist, though it looks at a future event, another rhetorical touch to communicate certainty of the effect of faith."

**Allen** - Note that faith is demonstrated by the power of the believing word. The man who has faith speaks, and the power of God is demonstrated. This accords with the Synoptic emphasis on the power of Jesus' word and is further illustrated by statements made by Paul (Rom. 15:18-19; 1 Cor. 2:4, 4:20). The statement is not to be watered down by spiritualizing it. It simply means that the person who has the smallest possible amount of real faith becomes the instrument of God's unlimited power. On the other hand, we must recognize that faith is not a magic by which we control God. Nor is it synonymous with presumption. We cannot use it to back God into a corner and force him to produce a sensational show which will enable us to make the headlines. (**ED**: SO BE CAREFUL - THIS IS NOT VALIDATING THE [HERETICAL "WORD OF FAITH" MOVEMENT](#)) (Broadman Bible Commentary – Luke-John)

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Stuck in a dead-end job and strapped for money, Kyle MacDonald came up with an improbable plan. Starting with one red paperclip, he would trade on the Internet until he exchanged it for a house. First, he traded the red paperclip for a fish-shaped pen. Next, he traded the pen for a doorknob. He traded the doorknob for a Coleman stove. He traded the Coleman stove for an electric generator and then later a snowmobile. Exactly one year and 14 trades later, MacDonald finally reached his goal. He exchanged a part in a Hollywood movie for a home in Saskatchewan, Canada. The true story of Kyle MacDonald is told in his book *One Red Paperclip*. Now the book is being made into a movie. Fame, fortune, a book, a movie deal, and a home — it all began with one red paperclip. Sounds incredible, doesn't it? But our Christian faith is like that red paperclip. Jesus said that if we have faith the size of a mustard seed, we will be able to move mountains or uproot a sycamine tree into the sea. With the Lord, nothing is impossible. We are to be a people of faith. How does that happen? (Mattoon [Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

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**ILLUSTRATION** - A man who was buried in a tomb that requested a great mass of granite over the top of his grave when he died. He had said if there ever was a resurrection it might be certain he should never rise! The granite stone weighing tons is there...but split in two! - Before they could place that large granite stone on the grave a bird happened to drop an acorn right there. An oak tree sprang up & the living power of the acorn split the granite in two. [small & weak, but has life!] ([Brian Bell](#))

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### **Mattoon - A Study on Faith**

1. The Source of Faith is from the Word of God— Romans 10:17— So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
2. The Summons of Faith— We need faith to grow in the Lord and to obey His Word. We should desire it. We saw this in Luke 17. Luke 17:5— And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.
3. Our Service and Faith—How do we work for the Lord? John 6:28-29— ... Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? [29] Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. There are thousands of ways to please the Lord, but not one of those ways is without faith. It is impossible to please the Lord without believing in Him. Hebrews 11:6— But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Faith gives us calm about our past failures and mistakes, the courage to face the present with confidence, and the future with great expectancy. Serving the Lord requires faith.

4. The Saints and Faith— Romans 5:1— Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: Habakkuk 2:4— Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

5. Standards of Faith— Faith without works is dead. James 2:17— Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. A person's faith is not judged by what he says about it, but by what he does about it. Faith with works is a force; faith without works is a farce. Our faith is to be active and a part of our lives, not just a bunch of mere words that have no impact upon us.

6. The Strength of Faith— Your faith in the Lord has tremendous power. Mark 9:23— Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. Matthew 17:20— And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place: and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Doubt makes the mountains that faith can remove. Faith moves mountains or tunnels through them. If you can't move your mountains, at least climb them by faith and the grace of God.

7. Subduing Faith—Our faith in the Lord and His help enables us to put into practice the truths of Scripture. It helps us to conquer the weaknesses of our flesh. 1 John 5:4— For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

8. Smarts and Faith—Faith is needed to get wisdom and direction. James 1:5-6... If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. [6] But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

Some people make the mistake of asking the Lord for faith and direction, and then they grab the steering wheel of their life. They will not yield control to the Lord. God wants us to entrust our lives to His care and control.

9. The Shield of Faith— Ephesians 6:16— Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Luke 17:7 “Which of you, having a slave plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come immediately and sit down to eat’?”**

**KJV Luke 17:7** But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

- Luke 13:15; 14:5; Matthew 12:11
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:5-10 More Faith or More Obedience?](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:5-10 Four Hallmarks of Humility. Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

## THE DUTY OF SLAVES

The question arises as to how this next section (Lk 17:7-10) links with the previous segment.

**Leon Morris** says "When people have such faith they may be tempted to **spiritual pride**. Jesus teaches humility by referring to standard practice with slaves. At the end of the day's work the master does not call the slave to have dinner (though our Master does that and more! 12:37; 22:27). Rather he calls on the slave to serve him while he eats. And he does not thank the slave for doing what he is told (9). That is no more than his duty. So with God's servants ('slaves'). We are required to be perfect (Matt. 5:48). Whenever we complete a task we cannot claim that we have done more than we should." ([The Gospel According to St. Luke: An Introduction and Commentary](#) - borrow)

**Warren Wiersbe** adds - Jesus knew how to balance one truth with another so that His disciples would not go to extremes. The miraculous faith of Lk 17:6 must be balanced with faithful day-by-day "ordinary service" that may not be exciting. Here is a servant who plows, takes care of cattle, and even cooks! He does each job faithfully so that he might please his master. But when we do our jobs, we are still only "unprofitable servants." The word translated "unprofitable" means "without need," that is, nobody owes him anything. Even the rewards we get from the Lord are pure grace! He does not "owe" them to us because we have only done our duty. (Borrow [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#) )

**MacArthur** has a similar train of thought as Wiersbe and Morris - Although some fail to see the connection, this concluding parable fits in with the overall theme of this section. The scribes and Pharisees were obsessed with being honored. In Matthew 23:5-7 Jesus

said of them, "They do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments. They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men" (cf. Luke 20:46-47). That attitude is not to characterize the true followers of Jesus Christ. There is a danger that as they recognize their weakness, trust in God's power, and are used by Him that they become arrogant and prideful. Lest they forget that everything they have and do is solely by God's grace, Jesus told this parable as a warning against spiritual pride. (See [Luke Commentary](#))

**Which of you, having a slave ([doulos](#)) plowing or tending sheep** - Who is you? Jesus is still addressing the apostles (and disciples), who would be familiar with the practices of masters and their slaves. The slave was doing what was expected of him.

Spurgeon says ""Mark you, he was not laying down the way of salvation, but pointing out a path of service for those who were already saved." ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**MacArthur** adds that "Slaves were generally better off than freemen, who tended to be day laborers living from hand to mouth. Slaves had security, since they lived in the master's home and he met their needs."

**Steven Cole** - Jesus responds that the amount of faith isn't really the issue, since a small amount of faith will accomplish great things (Lk 17:5-6). The real issue is adopting the proper attitude as a servant and not thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought to think (Lk 17:7-10). ([More Faith or More Obedience](#))

**Henry Morris** - This is a parable dealing with service for the Lord. The "servant" is actually a slave, required to do his master's bidding. His ministry of plowing and feeding suggests the familiar parallel of caring for sheep, the duties of a shepherd or "pastor." In fact, the words "feeding cattle" could better be translated "pasturing."

**Will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come immediately and sit down to eat'?**- Answer? No one. They are still expected to be slaves, not honored guests.

**Sit down to eat** (recline at the table) - In the first century middle eastern meals were not eaten while sitting at a table, but while reclining on one's side on the floor with the head closest to the low table and the feet farthest away.

**Keener** - Most slaveholders had few slaves; thus the slaves did both fieldwork and food preparation. Masters regarded this work as their slaves' duty, not an option. Nor was it considered honorable for masters to eat with their slaves, and it was virtually never done. The point of the illustration seems to be: Faith grows as one uses it as a servant; its end is service, and it is never an end in itself. (IVP Background Commentary)

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**Slave** ([1401](#)) ([doulos](#) from [deo](#) = to bind) ([Click](#) additional notes on [doulos](#)) was an individual bound to another in servitude and conveys the idea of the slave's close, binding ties with his master, belonging to him, obligated to and desiring to do his will and in a permanent relation of servitude. In sum, the will of the **doulos** is consumed in the will of the master. As an aside Christians are frequently described as slaves of God and the Lord Christ (e.g., Acts 4:29; Ro. 1:1; Gal. 1:10; Col. 1:7; 4:12; 2Ti 2:24; 1Pe 2:16; Rev. 1:1). Friberg on *doulos* - (1) generally, as one who serves in obedience to another's will = slave, servant (Jn 15:15); (2) literally, in contrast to (a) a master slave (Mt 8:9); (b) a freeman bondman, slave (Col 3.11), opposite *eleutheros* (freeman) and *polites* (citizen); (c) a son (house) servant, family servant (Gal 4.7); (d) a believer regarded as a brother slave (Philemon 1:16); (3) figuratively; (a) of relationship to God, Christ, one's fellow man - servant (Gal 1.10); (b) of being controlled by sin - slave (Jn 8.34) *doulos*, on (l) of being in a servile condition enslaved, performing the service of a slave; figuratively, of unquestioning obedience, in either a good or bad sense - subservient, enslaved, subject (Ro 6.19) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Doulos in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 1:38; Lk. 1:48; Lk. 2:29; Lk. 7:2; Lk. 7:3; Lk. 7:8; Lk. 7:10; Lk. 12:37; Lk. 12:43; Lk. 12:45; Lk. 12:46; Lk. 12:47; Lk. 14:17; Lk. 14:21; Lk. 14:22; Lk. 14:23; Lk. 15:22; Lk. 17:7; Lk. 17:9; Lk. 17:10; Lk. 19:13; Lk. 19:15; Lk. 19:17; Lk. 19:22; Lk. 20:10; Lk. 20:11; Lk. 22:50; Acts 2:18; Acts 4:29; Acts 16:17

**Luke 17:8 "But will he not say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, and properly clothe yourself and serve me while I eat and drink; and afterward you may eat and drink'?"**

KJV And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

- **Prepare something for me to eat:** Ge 43:16 2Sa 12:20

- **properly clothe yourself** : Lu 12:37
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:5-10 More Faith or More Obedience?](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:5-10 Four Hallmarks of Humility, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

**Henry Morris** - Make ready. After his pasturing duties are done, the bondsman (symbolizing a Christian redeemed to serve Christ) is expected then to serve his master. This requires proper preparation ("make ready") and equipment ("gird thyself"). Then the slave is ready to "serve me." Here a different Greek word for slave is used, meaning "minister to me." Perhaps the analogy is that feeding the sheep is a duty, while feeding the master is a ministry.

**Spurgeon** - This world is the place of service; we are not to be expecting to have the festival here. The great supper comes at the end of the day. This is the time for us to serve, even as Jesus did when he was here; and we are to serve right on till the close of the day, even as Jesus did.....See, brethren, our position as believers; we are here as servants. It is not the time for feasting yet. Whatever work we have done, even if it is getting towards the evening of our life's day, we must not think of sitting down yet, and expecting our Master to wait upon us. No, we must go on with our service, and reckon it to be our highest privilege still to gird ourselves, and wait on him. This is not the place of resting or of feasting; this is the day of our holy servitude. Let us work on, ploughing while we have strength for it; and when the sun goes down at eventide, then waiting like servants at the table of their Lord. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**But will he not say to him properly clothe (perizonnumi) yourself and serve (diakoneo) me while I eat and drink** - The question includes a Greek particle, *ouchi*, that expects a positive reply. Yes the master would be expected to say this to the slave who was to prepare a meal before eating himself. He will tell him "gird yourself" ([perizonnumi](#)) as with an apron or towel, in preparation for service to the master. **Serve** is [present imperative](#) signifying "Serve me throughout the meal in the various duties of such table service" (VANT)

**And afterward you may eat and drink?**- Literally "after these things." Could this be an allusion to the great Messianic Banquet in eternity future? That seems very possible, but see the incredible description below.

Note that while the master is to be served by the slave, we see an unbelievable turn around in Lk 12:37 where the Master, indeed the King of kings Himself, girds Himself and waits on His subjects! Who is this King of glory? How profound is His example of humility and servanthood! O, to be more like Jesus day by day. Here is one of the most incredible verses in the Bible...

"Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them. (Lk 12:37+)

#### Luke 17:9 "He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he?"

- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:5-10 More Faith or More Obedience?](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:5-10 Four Hallmarks of Humility, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

### THE SLAVE OBEYS COMMANDS

**He does not thank the slave (doulos) because he did the things which were commanded, does he?** - The Greek construction anticipates a negative reply which is indicated in the translation by the ending, "**does he?**" The point is that slaves have to carry out their duties without expecting that performing their duties places their masters under obligation. Thanks are not required. Of course Jesus is not encouraging one to be rude or inconsiderate, but simply explaining the way a master and slave generally interacted. And He is pointing to the relationship of a disciple or slave ([doulos](#)) to his master God. God is not a debtor to a disciple. Every disciple is a debtor to God, Who freely bestows grace upon grace that we might serve His good pleasure. We are the ones who need to give thanks to our Lord and Master Christ Jesus!

**Bock** - The service of God's servant is not a matter for negotiation but is a duty. The ancient household servant was responsible for many activities, from working the fields to preparing the meals. A ancient servant's work never seemed to be done. Such is also the case here. Jesus pictures a servant coming in from a long day of farming or shepherding, only to be asked to prepare the owner's dinner. The servant will not get a meal until the master is served. Not only that, the servant will not be thanked as if he had done something special. Rather, he will do it because it is his duty

**Spurgeon** - Do you take off your hat to your servants, and say, "I am very grateful to you for doing your duty"? Not so. And even he who serves God best, may he expect honour as his due? Ah! no; he shall have honour because of the grace of his Master; but it is not his place to look for it, much less is it right for him to expect it as his due....When the serving-man has done his day's work, his master does not say, "I am very grateful to you, John, for what you have done for me." He will have his wages, they will be his master's thanks. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

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## Unanswered Prayers

Read: Luke 7:1-10

[Jesus said], "I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" —Luke 7:9

An explanation we often hear for "unanswered" prayers is that we don't have enough faith. But Jesus said in Luke 17:6 that if we have faith the size of a mustard seed, we can command a mulberry tree to be uprooted and planted in the sea and it will obey us. In other words, the effectiveness of our prayers depends not on how much faith we have but on whether we even have faith.

Luke tells of a Roman centurion with "great faith" (7:9). His faith was expressed first as an appeal to Jesus to heal his dying servant. Then it was expressed as an acknowledgment that Jesus could heal his servant anytime, anywhere. The centurion did not ask Jesus to do things his way.

Faith has been described as "trusting God's heart and trusting God's power." Some prayers that seem to go unanswered are simply instances in which God has lovingly overruled our wishes. He knows that what we have asked for is not best. Or it may be that our timing is not His timing, or He has some far greater purpose in mind. Let us remember, even Jesus prayed to His heavenly Father, "Nevertheless not My will, but Yours" (Luke 22:42). By C. P. Hia ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Do we have the centurion's great faith—a faith that trusts God to do His work, in His way?

Unanswered prayers are answered still  
As part of God's great master plan;  
They help to carry out His will  
To demonstrate God's love for man.  
—D. De Haan

God's answers are wiser than our prayers.

**Luke 17:10 "So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done.'"**

BGT Luke 17:10 ο τως κα με ς, ταν ποι σητε π ντα τ διαταχθ ντα μ ν, λ γετε τι δο λοι χρε ο σμεν, φε λομεν ποι σαι πεποι καμεν.

KJV Luke 17:10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

NET Luke 17:10 So you too, when you have done everything you were commanded to do, should say, 'We are slaves undeserving of special praise; we have only done what was our duty.'

CSB Luke 17:10 In the same way, when you have done all that you were commanded, you should say, 'We are good-for-nothing slaves; we've only done our duty.'

ESV Luke 17:10 So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'

NIV Luke 17:10 So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'

NLT Luke 17:10 In the same way, when you obey me you should say, 'We are unworthy servants who have simply done our duty.'

NRS Luke 17:10 So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, 'We are worthless



slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!"

YLT Luke 17:10 'So also ye, when ye may have done all the things directed you, say -- We are unprofitable servants, because that which we owed to do -- we have done.'

GWN Luke 17:10 That's the way it is with you. When you've done everything you're ordered to do, say, 'We're worthless servants. We've only done our duty.'

NKJ Luke 17:10 "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.'"

NAB Luke 17:10 So should it be with you. When you have done all you have been commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done what we were obliged to do.'

MIT Luke 17:10 Nor should you expect it. When you have done all you were told to do, say, "We servants are unworthy of commendations; we were obligated to do what we did."

NJB Luke 17:10 So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, "We are useless servants: we have done no more than our duty." '

ASV Luke 17:10 Even so ye also, when ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do.

DBY Luke 17:10 Thus \*ye\* also, when ye shall have done all things that have been ordered you, say, We are unprofitable bondmen; we have done what it was our duty to do.

BBE Luke 17:10 In the same way, when you have done all the things which are given you to do, say, There is no profit in us, for we have only done what we were ordered to do.

- 1 Chronicles 29:14-16; Job 22:2,3; 35:6,7; Psalms 16:2,3; 35:6,7; Proverbs 16:2,3; Isaiah 6:5; 64:6; Matthew 25:30,37-40; Romans 3:12; 11:35; 1 Corinthians 9:16,17; 15:9,10; Philippians 3:8,9; Philemon 1:11; 1 Peter 5:5,6
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:5-10 More Faith or More Obedience?](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:5-10 Four Hallmarks of Humility. Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

## DISCIPLES MANIFEST A SERVANT'S HUMILITY

**So** (serves to draw a conclusion) **you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you**- Now Jesus applies this parable of a slave doing his duty to the disciples (**when YOU do**). The point is that whenever they (or we) complete some service for our Master, we cannot claim that we have done more than we should have done.

**Spurgeon** - And who shall praise us for that? The most self-denying servant of the Saviour, the most ardent labourer for the Lord, will expect nothing of God except to be blessed by his abounding grace. What can we deserve of the dear hands of him who bought us with his blood? Are we not the bondservants of Christ? "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." Therefore, whatever service you can render is due to him; and unto him let it be freely given without one thought of self-praise or pride because it is given without one thought of self-praise or pride because it is done so well...."When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you." Ah! but we have not come anywhere near that yet; even if we had, we should still be "unprofitable servants." In our mind we should expect no thanks from our Master; but we should sorrow that we had not served him better. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Say, 'We are unworthy** (KJV - unprofitable - [achreios](#)) **slaves** ([doulos](#)); **we have done only that which we ought** ([opheilo](#) - we owe it, are morally obligated) **to have done** - Literally = "We are unprofitable servants, because that which we owed to do -- we have done." (See [helpful note above by John Piper](#)) **Unworthy slaves** is difficult to grasp at first reading, especially by us who live a culture that constantly promotes self-esteem and self-worth (as does our fallen flesh)! Clearly this is a call for the disciple to maintain a lowly, humble attitude, the attitude of a debtor to God, which is a marked contrast with the Pharisees (cf Lk 18:12+). For all of us this is a daily fight and we must continually seek to see Christ increasing in our heart and us continually decreasing (Jn 3:30+) Service to God is a privilege and we should never feel we deserve "extra credit" for serving Him! Our duty is when we hear His command, we are to obey without question, hesitation or reservation. In simple terms a slave is obligated to serve which is what a disciple of Jesus does for that is our duty, our obligation, our responsibility, yea, even our privilege!

The idea of their declaration of being **unworthy** is not that they do not have profit to the master, but that they are to maintain a selfless attitude, a humble demeanor. This is the attitude a bondservant of Jesus should manifest to the world, because that is how

He walked! Like Master, like servant so to speak, for Jesus came not to "to be served, but to serve." (Mk 10:45+)

Note that unworthy does not mean that God did not value us. After all gave His only begotten Son to die for us, in our place. The Psalmist David asks "What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty! You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet," (Ps 8:4-6) What Jesus is teaching is that we cultivate the humble attitude of a *doulos* of God and Christ. And in Matthew we see the master's words to His slaves - "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave (*doulos*). You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'" (Mt 25:21)

**William MacDonald** - The true bondsman of Christ has no reason for pride. Self-importance must be plucked out by the roots and in its place there must be a true sense of unworthiness. ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#) - borrow. This resource is always worth checking)

**Life Application Study** note is a good word - Jesus is not suggesting that our service is meaningless or useless, nor is He advocating doing away with rewards. He is attacking unwarranted self-esteem and spiritual pride. ([Luke Application Study Notes](#) - Pdf of Luke )

**David Thompson** has an interesting thought that "Most people see themselves as unworthy when they face their sin, but Christ is challenging a disciple to see himself as unworthy when they are in His service."

As Paul says we are to serve "heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve." (Col 3:23-24+)

**NET Note** adds that "Some translations describe the slaves as "worthless" (NRSV) or "unworthy" (NASB, NIV) but that is not Jesus' point. These disciples have not done anything deserving special commendation or praise, but only what would normally be expected of a slave in such a situation (thus the translation "we have only done what was our duty").

**Criswell** - The point of the parable is that the nature of a master-servant relationship allows the master to make such demands on his servant. Since this is the case, how much more can God expect of His servants in His kingdom. God's servant must recognize that whatever he does in God's service is still inadequate.

**Albert Barnes** on **unworthy slaves** - We have conferred no favor. We have "merited" nothing. We have not "benefited" God (ED: IN THE SENSE THAT HE NEEDED ANYTHING - see Ro 11:35), or laid him under "obligation." If he rewards us (ED: WHICH HE PROMISES TO DO), it will be matter of unmerited favor. This is true in relation to Christians in the following respects: Our services are not "profitable" to God Job 22:2; he "needs" not our aid, and his essential happiness will not be increased by our efforts. The grace to do his will comes from him only, and all the praise of that will be due to him. All that we do is what is our "duty;" we cannot lay claim to having rendered any service that will "bind" him to show us favor; and, Our best services are mingled with imperfections. We come short of his glory Romans 3:23; we do not serve him as sincerely, and cheerfully, and faithfully as we ought; we are far, very far from the example set us by the Saviour; and if we are saved and rewarded, it will be because God will be merciful to our unrighteousness, and will remember our iniquities no more, Hebrews 8:12.

**Leon Morris** explains that "**Unworthy** (*achreios*) is a difficult word, but it seems to mean 'not yielding gain' (cf. its use of the man who hid his talent, Mt. 25:30). Our best service does not bring gain to God and give us a claim on him (cf. 1 Cor. 9:16). At best we have done only what was our duty. In the same spirit Rabbi Johanan b. Zakkai is reported to have said, 'if thou hast wrought much in the Law claim not merit for thyself, for to this end wast thou created' (Aboth 2:8). ([The Gospel According to St. Luke: An Introduction and Commentary](#) - borrow)

**Henry Morris** on **that which we ought** (KJV = "Duty") - Duty here actually means "debt." As bondslaves to Christ, we owe Him many debts. As Paul says, "I am debtor to preach the gospel" (Ro 1:14-15). No longer "to live after the flesh" is also a debt we owe (Ro 8:13). We "ought [same word] to bear the infirmities of the weak" (Ro 15:1), "to love one another" (1Jn 4:11), "to be teachers" (Heb 5:12), and "to walk as He walked" (1Jn 2:6). (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Robert Stein** - Believers are unworthy in the sense that at their very best all they have done is what they should have done, i.e., what the commandments teach. They have not done more than that. On the contrary, usually they have done much less. ([Luke - Page 430](#))

**Lowell Johnson** - Some come to the end of life and have no idea why they were born. I can tell you something sadder than that. Some Christians come to the end of life and have no idea why they were ever born again. The old gospel song tells us: "**For I was born to serve the Lord.**"

Living for Jesus a life that is true,  
Striving to please Him in all that I do;

Yielding allegiance, glad hearted and free,  
This is the pathway of blessing for me.

Living for Jesus Who died in my place,  
Bearing on Calvary my sin and dis grace;

Such love constrains me to answer His call,  
Follow His leading and give Him my all.

O Jesus, Lord and Savior, I give myself to Thee;  
For Thou, in Thy atonement, didst give Thyself for me.  
I own no other Master, My heart shall by Thy throne,  
My life I give, henceforth to live, O Christ for Thee alone.

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**ILLUSTRATION** - H. A. Ironside, the late beloved pastor of the historic Moody Memorial Church in Chicago, Illinois, used to tell his students of the maid who was asked how she knew she had really become a Christian. She replied, "I know I'm a Christian because I sweep under the rugs now!"

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**Unworthy** (888)(**achreios** from **a** = without + **chreía** = utility, usefulness) means unprofitable, as one who has been set aside and is no longer useful. It refers to being "without such qualities that deserve praise or commendation - not deserving special praise, not worthy of particular commendation." (Louw-Nida) It means either producing little or no profit or gain (financially), especially regarding a person's lack of praiseworthy merit. The only other use is Mt 25:30 ("Throw out the **worthless** slave")

**A T Robertson** on **achreios** - The word is common in Greek literature, but in the N. T. only here and Matt. 25:30 where it means "useless" (a privative and chreios from chraomai, to use). The slave who only does what he is commanded by his master to do has gained no merit or credit. "In point of fact it is not commands, but demands we have to deal with, arising out of special emergencies" (Bruce). The slavish spirit gains no promotion in business life or in the kingdom of God.

**Marvin Vincent** - From chreia, requirement; something which the master must pay. Not useless, but having rendered no service beyond what was due. "The profit does not begin until the servant goes beyond his obligation" (Meyer). "A servant owes all things" (Bengel).

**Thayer** says **achreios** is used as "a hyperbole of pious modesty in Luke 17:10 'the servant' calls himself achreios, because, although he has done all, yet he has done nothing except what he ought to have done; accordingly he possesses no merit, and could only claim to be called 'profitable,' should he do more.

**Gilbrant** - In classical Greek **achreios** is an adjective with the basic meaning of "useless, unprofitable, worthless." In the literature it is used to modify, among other nouns, "man," "law," and "wisdom." In addition, it is often used to specifically refer to someone who is unfit for war or the unserviceable part of an army. When achreios is neuter it can also refer to someone who has a helpless or foolish look. In the Septuagint it occurs in 2 Samuel 6:22 with the general meaning of "unworthy" or "lowly." In the New Testament **achreios** is found in two places. It occurs in Matthew 25:30 where it refers to the servant who hid in the ground the one talent which was entrusted to him by his master. Its basic meaning of "unprofitable" is seen here. Elsewhere it is found in Luke 17:10, where Jesus said that the disciples should see themselves as "unprofitable servants." Few will have a problem with this admission. But here in Luke, achreios also may incorporate the meaning of "unworthy," as in the Septuagint. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Ought** (3784)(**opheilo** from **ophéllō** = heap up) means to owe something to someone or [to be obligated](#). Literally it speaks of financial indebtedness and thus usually means to owe money, to be in debt, or to describe that which is due (Mt 18:28, Lk 7:41, 16:5, 7, Philemon 1:18). Figuratively, as in this passage, opheilo describes a sense of indebtedness to someone for something. For example, it was used to describe owing good will (1Co 7:3), love (Ro 13:8 = we can never love enough and will always "owe" this debt).

**Opheilo** - 34v - **had(1), have(1), indebted(2), must(1), obligated(3), ought(15), owe(4), owed(4), owes(1), responsible(1), should(2)**. Matt. 18:28; Matt. 18:30; Matt. 18:34; Matt. 23:16; Matt. 23:18; Lk. 7:41; Lk. 11:4; Lk. 16:5; Lk. 16:7; Lk. 17:10; Jn. 13:14; Jn. 19:7; Acts 17:29; Rom. 13:8; Rom. 15:1; Rom. 15:27; 1 Co. 5:10; 1 Co. 7:36; 1 Co. 9:10; 1 Co. 11:7; 1 Co. 11:10; 2 Co. 12:11; 2 Co. 12:14; Eph. 5:28; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 2:13; Phlm. 1:18; Heb. 2:17; Heb. 5:3; Heb. 5:12; 1 Jn. 2:6; 1 Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:11; 3 Jn. 1:8

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## An Attitude Problem

Read: Luke 17:1-10

We have done what was our duty to do. —Luke 17:10

Jesus told about a servant who, after working in the field all day, was not allowed to eat until he had prepared a meal for his master. He had to stand by until the man had finished eating. Jesus added that the master did not owe his servant even a thank you! (Luke 17:9-10). How could Jesus, who lived among us as “the One who serves” (22:27), seem so heartless?

The context provides the answer to this question. Jesus had just told His disciples that they were to be so mindful of others that they would never cause anyone to sin (vv.1-2). They were also to correct wrongdoers and never stop forgiving those who repent (vv.3-4).

The apostles, realizing that they could never live up to these expectations in their own strength, said, “Increase our faith” (v.5). Jesus promised that if they had a small grain of faith they would be able to remove whatever stood in the way of their obedience to these commands (v.6). He then told a parable to show them the need to fulfill these obligations cheerfully out of love rather than grudgingly or with an eye on being rewarded (vv.7-10).

We are to humbly depend on the Lord and obey Him because our hearts are full of love and gratitude. Anything less is unworthy of even a thank you. By Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

My life, my love I give to Thee,  
Thou Lamb of God who died for me;  
O may I ever faithful be,  
My Savior and my God!  
—Hudson

Real love expects nothing in return.

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## Nothing But Grace

Read: Luke 17:6-10

We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do. —Luke 17:10

In 1914, before the use of insulin injections, Corrie ten Boom’s Aunt Jans was diagnosed with diabetes. She knew that she did not have long to live. Yet, within a few days after learning this, she went right back to working in God-honoring causes. Several months later, a blood test indicated that the end was near.

The family was gathered in Aunt Jans’ room when Corrie’s father gently broke the news to her. Then he added, “Jans, some must go to their Father empty-handed, but you will run to Him with hands full.”

Jans’ response touched them all. She said that her good deeds were as “little tricks and trinkets.” Then she prayed, “Dear Jesus, I thank You that we must come with empty hands. I thank You that You have done all—all—on the cross, and that all we need in life or death is to be sure of this.”

Jesus reminded us that even after we’ve served Him faithfully we have merely done our duty (Luke 17:10). Yet, on another occasion He indicated that one day He would honor us for our faithfulness (12:37). How can this be? Because all that we have, even the ability to serve the Lord, comes to us as a gracious gift from Him.

Remember, from beginning to end, all is of grace. —By Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God's grace sustains the gift of life,  
Its labor and reward;  
What we possess is not our own—  
It all comes from the Lord.  
—D. De Haan

God owes us nothing but gives us everything.

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**KJV Luke 17:11** And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:11-19 How to Respond to God's Blessings](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:11-19 Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#) - John MacArthur

Last Trip From Galilee  
[LAB Study Notes](#) p.79

## ON THE ROAD TO JERUSALEM

This section (Lk 17:11-19) could sadly be entitled "Where are the nine?"

**While He was on the way to Jerusalem** - This recalls Luke 9:51+ where Luke records "When the days were approaching for His ascension, He was determined to go to Jerusalem." Jesus had set His face like flint, so to speak to finish His mission and He was now in the last few months before He entered Jerusalem on the Passover as the true Passover Lamb to be sacrificed once for all time. Luke mentions Jesus' journeying to Jerusalem a second time in Lk 13:22+ "And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Jerusalem." So here in Lk 17:11 we find Luke's third mention of Jesus' heading to His final fate in Jerusalem. In Luke 10:38+ the Lord was in Bethany, a short distance south-east of Jerusalem. As Norman Crawford says "Luke traces the footsteps of the Man of sorrows as He is journeying to Calvary, even though the route was not in a straight line."

See **Irving Jensen's** [overview of the book of Luke](#) with a major turning point at Luke 9:51, Lk 9:51 through Lk 19:27 beginning His last 6 months, primarily in Judea and Perea, which would involve primarily instruction, including many parables, and with about 60% of this section being unique to the Gospel of Luke.

**John MacArthur** - Up to this point, Luke has focused on Jesus' **coming**, detailing the angelic announcement of His birth to Mary the account of His birth, the incident in the temple when He was twelve, His baptism by John, His temptation by Satan, and the first two and a half years of His ministry as Messiah, reaching its pinnacle at the transfiguration. But at this point, the whole tenor of Luke's gospel changes. The focus is no longer on Jesus' **coming**, but on His **going**. The Galilean ministry is over, and He is on His way for the final time to His passion in Jerusalem. Although the Lord would, in the few intervening months of His Judean ministry, make brief return visits to Galilee (e.g., Lk 17:11-37), Galilee was no longer His base of operations. Much of the material in this travelogue (cf. Lk 9:52, 57; 10:1, 38; 13:22, 33; 17:11; 18:35; 19:1, 11, 28-29) of Christ's final journey to the cross (Lk 9:51-19:27) is unique to Luke's gospel. Of the other gospel writers, only John records features from the months in Judea (John 7-11). (See [Luke Commentary](#))

During His life recall that Jesus went to Jerusalem on 3 other occasions: (1) Feast of Tabernacles in John 7-8 [see Jn 7:2, 14ff], (2) Feast of Dedication [see Jn 10:22-23] and (3) To Bethany [Jn 11:1] which was very near Jerusalem to raise Lazarus from the dead [Jn 11:41-44]. But here in Luke 17:11, Dr Luke is referring to Jesus' final visit to the Holy City. So keep in mind that He has already raised Lazarus from the dead and John 11:54 says "Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called **Ephraim** (about 20 miles north of Jerusalem); and there He stayed with the disciples." It is likely that this location is the general area to which Luke is referring with the phrase **between Samaria and Galilee**.

**He was passing between Samaria and Galilee** (cf John 4:4) - Jewish Pilgrimage from Galilee to Jerusalem. A popular route passed directly through Samaria. However, some pious Jews took an alternate route through Jericho to avoid Samaria.

**Spurgeon** - There is but One of whom we will think tonight, our divine Lord, who was on his way to Jerusalem. Passing along the frontiers of Samaria and Galilee, he had the Jews on one side of him, and the Samaritans on the other. He took a middle course, as if to show how he was going up to the New Jerusalem, loaded with blessings for the Jews on one side, and Gentiles on the other. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**KJV Luke 17:12** And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:  
which

- Luke 5:12; 18:13; Leviticus 13:45,46; Numbers 5:2,3; 12:14; 2 Kings 5:27; 7:3; 2 Chronicles 26:20,21
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:11-19 How to Respond to God's Blessings](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:11-19 Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#) - John MacArthur

**As He entered a village** - Unnamed and thus unknown. It was not the place that was important but the miracle that took place. Notice these men were at a **distance**, so were probably not in the village per se, but outside of the village, for they were considered unclean and untouchable! So it is unlikely that they would have been allowed into the village confines. And Moses affirms this presumption, recording that "He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp." (Lev 13:46+) What a miserable, lonely existence! They were as near to Jesus as they dared come. But they were near enough!

**THOUGHT** - Have you ever shared the Gospel with someone and they were intrigued but felt so much guilt and shame that they "stood at a distance" from the good news you shared about Jesus? Well, you can tell them that they are in good company of 10 lepers who came out to meet (see "met" below) Jesus, but kept their distance and yet that did not prevent Jesus from meeting their great need! We are all at a distance from Jesus because of our many sins, but Jesus came for sinners, for the unclean, the untouchable, the guilt ridden and shame saturated. He came to seek and to save the lost!

**Ten leprous ([lepros](#)) men who stood at a distance met Him** - There are two key verbs in this description - **stood** and **met**. **Stood at a distance** indicates they had full-blown Leprosy, not just a little skin rash. And so they kept their distance from people, as was specified in the law of Moses. They may have been crying out "unclean, unclean." (Lev 13:45+) The verb met is significant indicating that although they knew they must keep their distance, they came forth to meet Him. Clearly their movement toward Him was a reflection of their belief He could help them.

"Command the sons of Israel that they send away from the camp every leper and everyone having a discharge and everyone who is unclean because of a dead person. "You shall send away both male and female; you shall send them outside the camp so that they will not defile their camp where I dwell in their midst." (Nu 5:2, 3+, cp Nu 12:13+, 2 Ki 7:3).

Anyone familiar with the **Law of Moses** would have quickly seen the impropriety of this scene

Leviticus 13:45; 46+ "As for the leper who has the infection, his clothes shall be torn, and the hair of his head shall be uncovered, and he shall cover his mustache and cry, '**Unclean! Unclean!**' "He shall remain unclean all the days during which he has the infection; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.

**Comment:** A person with leprosy, apart from the telltale malignant raw flesh and white hair, was to be otherwise identified by torn clothes, announcement of "unclean" when in the streets and was to live isolated from the community.

**Spurgeon** - Leprosy was very common in Palestine in Christ's day. How thankful we ought to be that, in this country, at any rate, it has almost entirely died out! There used to be, in almost every town, a leper-house provided for lepers, so common was leprosy in this country. Certain diseases seem to die out by degrees, and we should be very grateful that some of the worst forms of disease, by which men have been afflicted, have passed away. In this case, there were no less than ten in one village. They "stood afar off," as was most proper, lest they should communicate the contagion to others. They had to cry out, and warn men not to come too near them, saying, with covered lip, "Unclean! unclean! unclean!" The muffled sound that they made, if the word could not be distinguished, helped to warn the passers-by to give them a wide berth. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Arnold Fruchtenbaum** has an interesting note stating that "The priests kept close records of those who were declared lepers in Jewish society, and **they taught that only the Messiah could heal a leper.**" In his article entitled ["The Three Messianic Miracles"](#) Fruchtenbaum writes....

Some time prior to the coming of Yeshua (Jesus), the ancient rabbis separated miracles into two categories. First were those miracles anyone would be able to perform if they were empowered by the Spirit of God to do so. The second category of miracles were called "messianic miracles," which were miracles only the Messiah would be able to perform. Yeshua did miracles in both categories: general miracles and also messianic miracles. So because of the rabbinic teaching that certain miracles would be reserved only for the Messiah to



do, whenever He performed a messianic miracle it created a different type of reaction than when He performed other types of miracles.

The first messianic miracle was the healing of a leper....From the time the Mosaic Law was completed, there was no record of any Jew who had been healed of leprosy. While Miriam was healed of leprosy, this was before the completion of the Law. Naaman was healed of leprosy, but he was a Syrian Gentile, not a Jew. From the time the Mosaic Law was completed, there was never a case of any Jew being healed of leprosy.

Leprosy was the one disease that was left out of rabbinic cures; there was no cure for leprosy whatsoever. Yet Leviticus 13-14 gave the Levitical Priesthood detailed instructions as to what they were to do in case a leper was healed. On the day that a leper approached the priesthood and said, "I was a leper but now I have been healed," the priesthood was to give an initial offering of two birds. For the next seven days, they were to investigate intensively the situation to determine three things. First, was the person really a leper? Second, if he was a real leper, was he really cured of his leprosy? Third, if he was truly cured of his leprosy, what were the circumstances of the healing? If after seven days of investigation they were firmly convinced that the man had been a leper, had been healed of his leprosy, and the circumstances were proper, then, on the eighth day there would be a lengthy series of offerings. All together, there were four different offerings. First, there was a trespass-offering; second, a sin-offering; third, a burnt-offering; and fourth, a meal-offering. Then came the application of the blood of the trespass-offering upon the healed leper followed by the application of the blood of the sin-offering upon the healed leper. The ceremony would then end with the anointing of oil upon the healed leper.

**Although the priesthood had all these detailed instructions as to how they were to respond in the case of a healed leper, they never had the opportunity to put these instructions into effect, because from the time the Mosaic Law was given, no Jew was ever healed of leprosy. As a result, it was taught by the rabbis that only the Messiah would be able to heal a Jewish leper....**

Yeshua sent these ten lepers directly to the very priesthood that, under the leadership of Caiaphas, had just decreed a sentence of death against Him. This meant that instead of one messianic miracle, there were now ten messianic miracles performed: the first messianic miracle was performed ten times over. Ten times over Caiaphas and the priesthood had to spend seven days investigating the whole situation. Ten times over, they had to decree that all ten of these lepers had been cleansed and healed of their leprosy. Ten times over, they had to decree that Jesus had performed the miracle. It is really showing some Jewish humor, if you will, on the part of Yeshua that He chose to send to the leadership of Israel ten healed lepers right after they decreed His rejection by sentencing Him to death. **His Messiahship was proclaimed, not merely by the mouth of two or three witnesses, but by the mouth of ten witnesses. Again, He proved to the leadership that they had no basis, no ground, for the rejection of His messianic claims.** ([The Three Messianic Miracles](#))

**Ryrie** - See Lev. 13:1-59-note for seven forms of this skin disease, generally regarded not to be the leprosy we know today. A leper was ceremonially unclean, had to live outside of the towns, and had to cry "unclean" when other people came near. Leprosy serves as an illustration of sin.

**Spurgeon on stood at a distance** - The rule was that they should never come upon the public road, or near the highway, lest the disease should be taken by others who might come near them. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Spurgeon** - Oh, the abundance of human misery that met the Saviour's eye: "ten men that were lepers"! I was reading only yesterday of what happened in Westminster, many years ago. When the king went along the highway, there were crowds of poor lepers on either side of the road, a shocking sight to see in this dear land of ours; and the king, in his tender mercy, simply passed a law that the lepers should not come near the road again to hook his gracious majesty with their misery. That is all he had to do for them; but our glorious King treated lepers very differently: "There met him ten men that were lepers." ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Spurgeon** - Lepers were allowed to enter villages, but not to go into the large walled towns. They were, however, commanded to stand at a certain distance from other people; and these men did so. This must have been a terrible sight, ten men afflicted with such a horrible disease all in one group. It shows how prevalent at that time was this disease, now happily so rare, at least among us: "Ten men that were lepers." It seemed as if the effect of sin in men became more conspicuous in the day when the Great Healer of men was here in person. Then Satan's chain was lengthened that he might have greater power over the bodies of men, that his Master might subdue him, and that Christ Jesus the Lord might have the greater victory over the prince of darkness. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

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**Leprous** (3015)(lepros from [lepra](#) from [lepis](#) = a scale as of a fish from [lepo](#) = to peel) means scaly, scabby, rough, and then one

afflicted with leprosy . Keep in mind that leprosy could describe a number of skin diseases, some not serious all the way to the most serious which was leprosy or Hansen's Disease ([see picture](#)), produced by the [Mycobacterium leprae](#) ([Medicine.net See modern classification scheme of leprosy](#)). Leprosy is an ancient disease having been found even in Egyptian mummies, and many consider Egypt as the country of origin of this disease. As alluded to above, Leviticus 13-14 deal with leprosy in considerable detail. In short, any Israelite with a skin disease would go to the priest for a "diagnosis" and if it was determined to be communicable, the infected person was excluded from social contact which was then restricted to other lepers. Even the family who loved you had to stay away from a leprous relative, who lived like aliens with this miserable disease. One of the most horrible aspects of leprosy is destruction of peripheral nerves, this neuropathy resulting in limbs that in effect cannot sense pain and thus are prone to severe injuries from burns, cuts, etc. In a sense the leper unable to sense pain destroys his own toes, digits and limbs.

- See study on Hebrew word for Leprosy ([06883](#))([tsaraath](#))

One of the great stories about Leprosy in the modern era is that of the renowned surgeon Dr. Paul Brand ([his website](#)) who was raised in India and became a Christian missionary doctor ministering to these outcast and downcast people. Take a moment and watch this [2 minute summary of leprosy](#).

[Wikipedia](#) - Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease (HD), is a long-term infection by the bacterium *Mycobacterium leprae* or *Mycobacterium lepromatosis*. Initially, infections are without symptoms and typically remain this way for 5 to 20 years. Symptoms that develop include granulomas of the nerves, respiratory tract, skin, and eyes. (Ed: and even the vocal cords so that speech was impaired) This may result in a lack of ability to feel pain, thus loss of parts of extremities due to repeated injuries or infection due to unnoticed wounds. Weakness and poor eyesight may also be present. Leprosy is spread between people. This is thought to occur through a cough or contact with fluid from the nose of an infected person. Leprosy occurs more commonly among those living in poverty. Contrary to popular belief, it is not highly contagious.

**Holman Bible Dictionary** - A generic term applied to a variety of skin disorders from psoriasis to true leprosy. Its symptoms ranged from white patches on the skin to running sores to the loss of digits on the fingers and toes. For the Hebrews it was a dreaded malady which rendered its victims ceremonially unclean—that is, unfit to worship God (Leviticus 13:3). Anyone who came in contact with a leper was also considered unclean. Therefore, lepers were isolated from the rest of the community so that the members of the community could maintain their status as worshipers. Other physical disorders or the flow of certain bodily fluids also rendered one unclean (see Leviticus 12:1-14:32; Leviticus 15:1-33 ). Even houses and garments could have "leprosy" and, thus, be unclean (Leviticus 14:33-57 ). Jesus did not consider this distinction between clean and unclean valid. A person's outward condition did not make one unclean; rather that which proceeds from the heart determines one's standing before God (Mark 7:1-23; compare Acts 10:9-16). Therefore, Jesus did not hesitate about touching lepers (Mark 1:40-45) and even commanded His disciples to cleanse lepers (Matthew 10:8 ). Jesus even made a leper the hero of one of His parables (Luke 16:19-31 ).

- See more [detailed description of the instructions concerning leprosy in Leviticus 13](#)
- [Why is leprosy talked about so much in the Bible?](#)

Met (528)(*apantao* - *apó* = from + *antáo* = meet) means to meet, to encounter

encounter meet

come from another place into the presence of

meet from opposite directions

Mt28:9; Mk5:2;14:13;Lu17:12; Jn 4:51; Ac16:16;

1Sa10:5, Ru1:16

Spoken of a hostile encounter

(Mk 5:2; Lu14:31; Jud 8:21; 2 Sa15).

**Luke 17:13 and they raised their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"**

**KJV Luke 17:13** And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

- **have mercy on us** Luke 18:38,39; Matthew 9:27; 15:22; 20:30,31; Mark 9:22

- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:11-19 How to Respond to God's Blessings](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:11-19 Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#) - John MacArthur

## LEPERS APPEAL TO JESUS TO SHOW MERCY

**And they raised their voices** - Raising one's voice is a frequent idiom in the Septuagint and also appears in Greek from the classical era forward. Peter filled with the Spirit **raised his voice** and delivered his sermon in Acts 2 at which about 3000 souls were saved (Acts 2:14, 42). The Gentiles **raised their voice** in Acts 14:11 claiming Paul and Barnabas were gods. In Acts 22:22 the crowd listened to Paul up to his statement that he was being sent to the Gentiles, which cause the Jewish crowd to raise their voices. In Lk 11:27 a woman in the crowd **raised her voice** saying ""Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts at which You nursed." In all of these occasions it is clear that raising one's voice is similar to what we might say today "They were [yelling or screaming at the top of their lungs](#)," signifying they were yelling as loud as their voices would allow. And keep in mind that [Leprosy could affect the vocal cords](#), but, even if it did affect these 10, laryngeal affliction would not impede them, for one glimpse of Jesus stimulated cries of desperation. And since they had to be far away from Him, they had to be loud to assure He would hear them. Would it be Lord, that more "leprous" (covered with the "scales of sin") men and women would raise their voices, even if be but a slight whisper, when they see an ambassador of Jesus! Amen

**Spurgeon** - Not much of voices were they likely to have, for the leprosy dries the throat, and the voice is low and husky, and when lepers cry, "Unclean, unclean," it is an awfully sad sound, but very weak. These ten lepers lifted up their poor voices...They raised a plain cry, and the whole ten of them had to lift up their voices before they could be well heard. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Jesus** ([lesous](#)), **Master** ([epistates](#)), **have mercy** ([eleeo](#)) **on us** -While **have mercy** is in the [aorist imperative](#), a verb tense and mood which normally reflects a command, in the context of prayer, the imperative mood does not signify a demand, but is rather, a desperate petition from an inferior to One Who has the superior power and authority to grant the request. In addressing Him this way, we can conclude that the lepers knew of His reputation, of His power over illness and His ability to heal.

**Norman Crawford** - When Peter was overwhelmed with the glory of the mountain top experience he called the Lord epistatēs (Lk 9:49-note). These lepers have a lesson to teach to people of our day. They did not address the Lord as **Jesus**, but recognizing His sovereign power and authority, they called Him, "**Jesus, Master**". ([What the Bible teaches – Luke](#)) (**Ed**: Have you ever addressed Him as **Jesus, Master**? Are we not too, beggars like the lepers, our disease of sin course being far worse. Yes, we may be healed of our "leprous condition" of sin's power and sin's wages (eternal death), we are still vulnerable to sin. We too need to continually raise our voices and cry out "Jesus, Master!")

**MacArthur** on **have mercy on us** - It expresses a recognition of superior power and one who at the same time is approachable. Not just a recognition of power but to cry "Have mercy!" assumes that someone before has indicated to you that this man listens to people who cry for mercy. So His power and His compassion are widely known. They're aware of it, aware enough of it to cry out to Him for healing. ([Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#))

One of my favorite older choruses is [Jesus, Name Above All Names](#)

Jesus, Name above all names,  
Beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.  
Emanuel, God is with us,  
Blessed Redeemer, Living Word.

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**Jesus** (2424) ([lesous](#)) is [transliteration](#) of the Greek [lesous](#), which in turn is the transliteration of the Hebrew name [Jehoshua](#) ([Yehoshua](#)) or [Jeshua](#) ([Yeshua](#)) which mean *Jehovah is help* or *Jehovah is salvation*. Stated another way the Greek [lesous](#) corresponds to the OT [Jehoshua](#) ([Yehoshua](#)) which is contracted as [Jeshua](#) ([Yeshua](#)). Most of the NT uses of **lesous** refer to our Lord Jesus. In the Gospels the single Name **Jesus** ([lesous](#)) is used as His personal Name and is found 538 times. In the Epistles Jesus is usually (but not always - e.g., Ro 3:26; 4:24; 1Cor 12:3; 2Cor 11:4; Phil 2:10; 1Th 4:14; Heb 7:22; 10:1 [9](#), etc) used in combination with Christ or Lord (see next paragraph). Jesus is known by **Christ** alone some 44 times in the Gospels.

**NET Note on Jesus** - The Greek form of the name **lēsous**, which was translated into Latin as *Jesus*, is the same as the Hebrew **Yeshua** (Joshua), which means "Yahweh saves" (Yahweh is typically rendered as "LORD" in the OT).

**Master** (1988)(**epistates** from **ephistemi** = to set over) is literally one who stands over and means a person of high status, chief, commander. All NT uses by Luke (Lk. 5:5; Lk. 8:24; Lk. 8:45; Lk. 9:33; Lk. 9:49; Lk. 17:13), all (except Lk 17:13) spoken by the disciples and all refer to **Jesus**. Matthew and Mark use either "Teacher" or "Rabbi" instead of Master. TDNT comments that "the transcription **rabbi** used by the other Evangelists is avoided by the Hellenist Luke (directed to Greek audiences who would not understand "rabbi")." Luke employed **epistates** as an equivalent of didaskalos, "teacher" (Luke 8:24; cf. Mark 4:38; 9:38; Luke 9:49). **Epistates** could describe a chief commander, "a public official in ancient Greece, Ptolemaic Egypt and the Hellenistic world" (Encyclopedia Britannica), a magistrate, a governor of a city, or a president of a college, but one thing all have in common is authority. In using **Master** the 10 lepers appear to be recognizing Jesus' authority.

**Encyclopedia Britannica** on **epistates** - The 5th-century-BCE Athenian epistatēs acted as chairman of the prytaneis, the executive committee of the Boule (council), and, for the 24-hour period of this office, functioned as the head of the government, keeping the seal of the state and the key to the treasury. In various periods he may have had administrative, political, fiscal, judicial, or military responsibilities. In the Hellenistic kingdoms and Egypt, the epistatēs became the district official of a nomós (province) or a subject city.

**Epistates - 6v** - Lk. 5:5; Lk. 8:24; Lk. 8:45; Lk. 9:33; Lk. 9:49; Lk. 17:13

**Have mercy** (**aurist imperative**)(1653)(**eleeo** from **eleos**) means to feel sympathy with the misery of another, especially such sympathy which manifests itself in action, less frequently in word alone. **Eleeo** indicates being moved to pity and compassion by some tragic circumstance (as would be the case of the 10 lepers whose fate in life was otherwise sealed as untouchable outcasts. Talk about having a poor "self-esteem!"), seeing the person's **dire** need and providing assistance to remove the need. **Vine** adds that **eleeo** "signifies, in general, "to feel sympathy with the misery of another," and especially sympathy manifested in act (action)."

**Vincent** adds that **eleeo** means "to **succor** or to show compassion. The (root) word (eleos) emphasizes the misery with which grace deals; hence, peculiarly the sense of human wretchedness coupled with the impulse to relieve it, which issues in gracious ministry."

**NIDNTT** writes of the root word **eleos** that in classical Greek -- It is "the emotion roused by contact with an affliction which comes undeservedly on someone else"

The phrase **have mercy** is found 15x in 14v in the NT and is predominantly in the Gospels, most often a request directed to Jesus usually asking for Jesus to heal them. Matt. 9:27 = two blind men; Matt. 15:22 = a Canaanite woman; Matt. 17:15 = a man in the multitude with a lunatic son; Matt. 20:30, 31 = two blind men (addressing Jesus as "Son of David" = Messianic title); Mk. 10:47; 48 = blind beggar Bartimaeus; Lk. 16:24 = the rich man in Hades addressing "Father Abraham"; Lk. 17:13; Lk. 18:38; 39 = blind man (cf Mt 20:30,31); Ro. 9:15; Jude 1:22; Jude 1:23

**Eleeo - 29v** - found mercy(1), had mercy(4), has mercy(2), have mercy(15), mercy(1), receive mercy(1), received mercy(3), show mercy(1), shown mercy(3), shows mercy(1). Matt. 5:7; Matt. 9:27; Matt. 15:22; Matt. 17:15; Matt. 18:33; Matt. 20:30; Matt. 20:31; Mk. 5:19; Mk. 10:47; Mk. 10:48; Lk. 16:24; Lk. 17:13; Lk. 18:38; Lk. 18:39; Rom. 9:15; Rom. 9:16; Rom. 9:18; Rom. 11:30; Rom. 11:31; Rom. 11:32; Rom. 12:8; 1 Co. 7:25; 2 Co. 4:1; Phil. 2:27; 1 Tim. 1:13; 1 Tim. 1:16; 1 Pet. 2:10; Jude 1:22; Jude 1:23

**Luke 17:14** When He saw them, He said to them, "Go and **show** yourselves to the priests." And as they were going, they were cleansed.

**KJV Luke 17:14** And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

- **Go and show yourselves to the priests** Luke 5:14; Leviticus 13:1,2-46; 14:2-32; Matthew 3:15; 8:4
- **as they were going, they were cleansed** 2 Kings 5:14; Isaiah 65:24; Matthew 8:3; John 2:5; 4:50-53; 9:7; 11:10
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:11-19 How to Respond to God's Blessings](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:11-19 Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Luke 5:14 And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

## OBEDIENCE TO JESUS BRINGS HEALING

**When He saw them** - It is interesting that Luke does not say "When He heard them." Undoubtedly, Jesus heard their desperate plea for mercy, but Luke emphasizes the fact that Jesus **saw** them (literally "seeing them"). Indeed, Jesus "**saw them**" as no other eyes could ever see them. Why? Because to the eyes of most men, these 10 were unattractive, even repulsive in appearance, but in the eyes of Jesus, they were objects of His love and the deep compassion of His tender heart. And these attributes are still His today for Jesus is "the same yesterday and today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8+)

Recall that in Luke 5:13+ Jesus approached the leper and **touched** him which shows us that He had no reluctance in going near and touching the 10 lepers. But this miracle would be performed in a different manner as explained below.

**Spurgeon** notes that "Even before he heard them, he saw their pitiable condition." There is a lesson here for all of us. Before we were saved, Jesus saw us in our pitiable condition of sin and spiritual death on the highway to hell without His intervention. But even after we are saved, Jesus still sees us and knows the trials and afflictions we are going through and stands ever ready to come to our aid. The writer of Hebrews says it this way - "For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered (Jesus understands what you are going through), He is able (dunamai means Jesus has the power, the omnipotence to do this) to come to the aid ([boetheo](#) - means to run to aid someone upon hearing their cry for help - our responsibility? Cry out for help!) of those who are tempted (are being tested - present tense)." (Heb 2:18+, cf Heb 4:15+) Not only did Jesus see the lepers, but He heard the lepers. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Life Application Note** - Because leprosy was contagious, people who had leprosy were required to try to stay away from other people and to announce their presence if they had to come near. Sometimes leprosy would go into remission. If a leper thought his leprosy had gone away, he was supposed to present himself to a priest, who could declare him clean (Leviticus 14). Jesus sent the 10 lepers to the priest before they were healed— and they went! They responded in faith, and Jesus healed them on the way. Is your trust in God so strong that you act on what he says even before you see evidence that it will work? ([Luke Application Study Notes](#) - Pdf )

In this story we see Jesus' divine goodness, tenderness, compassion, mercy and power to reverse a disease feared by all in the ancient world. And note that when Jesus healed and made whole it occurred in an instant and it was complete. What a dramatic scene this must have been, for the stigmata of leprosy are so readily seen on the face and hands of those affected. Imagine one of the 10 lepers looking at the other 9 and seeing their clear complexions and fully restored hands, arms and feet. This surely stirred amazement in all 10, but sadly only stirred gratitude in one of the 10.

**Go and show yourselves to the priests** - The priests functioned as the "health inspector's" so to speak and carried out a long process (isolation for 7 days -Lv 13:4-6ff+). **Show** is a command in the [aorist imperative](#). **Go** in context is also used in the sense of an imperative. The idea of the command is "Do this now! Do not delay!" Whoever is cured of leprosy must, according to the law, be declared clean by the priest (Lev. 14:1-32, 2). Jesus' instructions to the 10 lepers here is in direct contrast to the cleansed leper in Luke 5:14+ (cf Mt 8:4) "And **He ordered him to tell no one**, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them (Lev 14:4-7+)." (As an aside, notice that Jesus did keep the Mosaic regulations). Leprosy was so feared in Jesus' day that healing from this condition was a very notable miracle, and many of the Jews even considered it to be a divine curse (this mindset was probably based at least in part on King Uzziah being afflicted with leprosy sent by God in 2 Chr 26:19-20, 21 which says "King Uzziah was a leper to the day of his death; and he lived in a separate house, being a leper, for he was cut off from the house of the LORD."). Thus the declaration of healing from leprosy in the early phase of Jesus' ministry would have resulted in "overwhelming enthusiasm, unrealistic Messianic expectations and bring to bear upon Jesus undue pressure that could force Him out of His Father's timetable (cf John 7:6, 8)." ([MacArthur](#)) But now Jesus is in the last few months of His life, and knew His time was at hand (Mt 26:18), and so He does not command them not to tell about this miracle.

The fact that Jesus told them to **go** and **show** themselves to the priests indicates as noted above that Jesus kept the Law, but even more significantly indicates that the priests would be privileged to be eyewitnesses to an incredible miracle (actually 10 miracles)! And for 7 days (if they carried out the regulations in Lev 13:4-6+) these 10 men with clear complexions and smooth skin would stand in front of the priests as dramatic testimony to the power and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ! And yet, did the priests believe in Jesus as Messiah, Redeemer, Lord? While there were some (cf Acts 6:7+), many other priests rejected Jesus' claim as the long expected Messiah. Once again, we see that miracles, even astounding ones like 10 lepers being instantly cleansed, do not necessarily cause unbelievers to believe in Jesus. If you are an unbeliever and are saying "I want to see a miracle before I believe," than you need to learn from the Gospels. Most did not believe. In fact, in the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31, the rich man appealed to Abraham to let Lazarus return to his unbelieving brothers. And what was the response to that request?

"But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' "But he said, 'No, father



Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!" "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'" (Luke 16:29-31+).

If the Word of God, the Gospel, cannot save you, then miracles certainly cannot!

**Henry Morris** - The 13th and 14th chapters of Leviticus contain detailed laws and instructions for the ceremonial cleansing of lepers--116 verses altogether. The problem was that there was no cure for leprosy in those days, so the laws were never implemented. Naaman was miraculously healed (2 Kings 5:1-19), but he was not an Israelite, so did not follow the prescribed procedures for cleansing. So far as the record goes, this incident in Matthew is the first time ever that a cleansed leper would go to the priest in the manner prescribed by Moses. No wonder, in view of the hypocrisy and unbelief common in the priesthood of the time, that Christ said this would be "for a testimony unto them." No wonder, in view of the hypocritical unbelief so prevalent in the priesthood, that Jesus said this would be "for a testimony to them." What a WITNESS this would present to the RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY. (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Spurgeon** adds that "no man could be pronounced clean even if he were healed, until he had undergone the ceremony prescribed in the Mosaic law. These lepers were to go to the priests just as they were, so their going was an act of faith." ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Spurgeon** - There was a tacit promise in that they should be healed, for, of course, the showing themselves to the priests was not that they might be pronounced unclean, for they were so pronounced already by their own confession, but that they might be pronounced clean. They were to go to the priests, and there was an implied promise that, if they so went, when the priests looked upon them they would be healed. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Spurgeon** - That is all Jesus said to the lepers: "Go shew yourselves unto the priests." They were not to go to the priests till they were clean, for the priests could not heal them. It was the healed man who went to the priests to get a certificate that he was healed, and so might mingle in society again. It was a strange message, then, that the Saviour gave to these lepers: "Go shew yourselves unto the priests." And oh, the faith of these men! With only this shell of a promise, as it were, they cracked it, and found a promise inside it, for they said to themselves, "He would not send us to the priests for nothing; he would not mock our misery; he must mean to heal us:" and therefore away they went. A grand faith this! You are to come to Christ before you feel any grace in you; you are not to wait until you feel you are healed, and then come to him. Come just as you are, without any sense of grace, or any kind of feeling within you that is worth the having. Come just as you are. As the sinner believes, he is saved. As a man begins to go towards the Saviour, the Saviour's grace meets him. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**And as they were going, they were cleansed** ([katharizo](#)) - Notice that they obeyed. This suggests that they had some degree of faith or belief in Jesus or at least faith in His ability to help them. That this is the case is amplified by the fact that Luke does not record that Jesus said "You are clean. Now go to the priest." In Luke 5:13+ Jesus had commanded the leper '**Be cleansed** ([katharizo](#) in [aorist imperative](#)).'" But here He had just commanded the 10 **to go** to the priest and **show** themselves. Think about that moment when they heard Jesus' words. They were still horribly scarred with defiling leprosy and yet Jesus is telling them to **go** and **show**! They would hardly have been willing to **go** and **show** had they not had some element of belief that this Miracle Worker would somehow work a miracle in their lives. And as alluded to it is notable that the 10 were cleansed without a specific command from Jesus, signifying that Jesus as God could heal any way He chose to heal. So today we cannot hear His voice, but we can experience His power as we walk out in obedience to His commands (empowered by His Spirit). Are you experiencing the power of the Spirit of Christ in your life (e.g., being quick to forgive, holding back anger when the world would say you are justified to attack, etc - these are "miracles" as powerful as healing 10 lepers!)? If not could it be because you are not obeying His commands? We are not speaking of a legalistic keeping of rules, but of a heart continually surrendered to Jesus, with an ear ready and willing to hear His commands (e.g., as we read words like "Husbands **love** [[present imperative](#) - as your lifestyle] your wives..." Eph 5:25+, etc, do we hear and heed or do the commands of Scripture go in one ear and out the other?).

**MacArthur** on the faith of the 10 lepers - Do they have faith? Sure they have faith. They have a meager, basic faith in a healer. They have faith in the power and compassion of Jesus....Were they cleansed because they believed? Well it was a meager faith and Jesus asked them to demonstrate that meager faith. They were basically healed because He chose to heal them, but He involved their faith in it. There were times when Jesus healed people because they believed. There were many times when He healed people who didn't believe. In fact, there were times when He raised dead people and they can't believe. So there were times when faith played a role, and times when it did not. But in this case, He asked them to exhibit enough faith to do what He said. ([Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#))

**Spurgeon** exclaims "What a wonderful thing that must have been!" The men exhibited faith by starting on their way to the priest before being cleansed. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

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**They were cleansed** (2511) ([katharizo](#) from **katharos** = pure, clean, without stain or spot; English words - [catharsis](#) = emotional or

physical purging, [cathartic](#) = substance used to induce a purging, [Cathar](#) = member of a medieval sect which sought the purging of evil from its members) means to make clean by taking away an undesirable part. To cleanse from filth or impurity. [Click here \(and here\)](#) for more background on the important Biblical concept of **clean** and **cleansing**.

**Cleansed** is [aorist tense](#) (signifying this occurred at a point in time ~ instantaneous) and [passive voice](#) (the divine passive - the power to cleanse came from God, from Jesus Who is God).

Figuratively **katharizo** referred to cleansing from ritual contamination or impurity as in (Acts 10:15). In a similar sense **katharizo** is used of cleansing lepers from ceremonial uncleanness (Mt 8:2-3, et al) It follows that Lepers were forbidden to worship in the Temple in Jerusalem because of their ceremonial uncleanness.

Another figurative use of **katharizo** important to every believer is found in 1 John 1:9+ (cf James 4:8+, Hebrews 10:2+) which describes God's purifying us and cleansing us from sin and a guilty conscience thus making us acceptable to Himself, thus reestablishing fellowship. The condition for cleansing here in Luke 17:14 is not that different from the situation with the 10 lepers. Even as they raised their voices for God's mercy, so too, saints continually raise their voices in confession (in the [present tense](#) - so confessing should be a saint's habitual practice, that we might always remain filled with and controlled by the Holy Spirit, Who is grieved or quenched by our "ceremonial uncleanness.") (1John 1:9+)

**Katharizo - 30v - clean(3), cleanse(5), cleansed(16), cleanses(1), cleansing(1), declared...clean(1), make...clean(3), purify(1).** Matt. 8:2; Matt. 8:3; Matt. 10:8; Matt. 11:5; Matt. 23:25; Matt. 23:26; Mk. 1:40; Mk. 1:41; Mk. 1:42; Mk. 7:19; Lk. 4:27; Lk. 5:12; Lk. 5:13; Lk. 7:22; Lk. 11:39; Lk. 17:14; Lk. 17:17; Acts 10:15; Acts 11:9; Acts 15:9; 2 Co. 7:1; Eph. 5:26; Tit. 2:14; Heb. 9:14; Heb. 9:22; Heb. 9:23; Heb. 10:2; Jas. 4:8; 1 Jn. 1:7; 1 Jn. 1:9

**Luke 17:15 Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice,**

KJV Luke 17:15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

- Luke 17:17,18; 2 Chronicles 32:24-26; Psalms 30:1,2,11,12; 103:1-4; 107:20-22; 116:12-15; Psalms 118:18,19; Isaiah 38:19-22; John 5:14; 9:38
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:11-19 How to Respond to God's Blessings](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:11-19 Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#) - John MacArthur

## ONE LEPER RETURNS GLORIFYING GOD

**Now one of them when he saw that he had been healed** ([iaomai](#)) - He was walking in step with other 9 toward the priests, when the miraculous healing occurred. All of them saw that they had been healed, but one was impacted not as much by the healing as by the Healer!

**MacArthur on one of them..saw...turned back** ([hupostrepho](#)), - He had been in the presence of God and he wanted more than physical healing. He went back embracing the full potential of getting from God what he knew he really needed. His heart was longing for a relationship with the divine Healer. He wanted to give himself to that divine Healer. He wanted to fall on his face beneath that divine Healer as a recognized sinner, and worship and adore Him, as well as praise Him and thank Him. He wanted something more than just a physical healing. He knew enough about the Old Testament to know that God was not just a healer but a Redeemer and primarily a Redeemer and a Savior. He's not content with just the physical. He understands the reality of his alienation and need for reconciliation to God. ([Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#))

**Spurgeon** - They all saw that they were healed, and they all must have felt extremely glad. Oh, the happiness of feeling the hot blood cooled, and full health taking the place of languor and disease! ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Turned back** ([hupostrepho](#)), **glorifying** ([doxazo](#) in present tense - continually) **God loud voice** (megas + phone ~ "megaphone") - With a "megaphone" like our English "megaphone!" He was sounding forth. Now think about the scene. The disciples and undoubtedly other Jews following Jesus were witnesses of this event. And what did they see? They saw a man who had left a leper (and presumably they did not see the radical healing since it occurred as they were going to the priests -- although one cannot be

dogmatic) and returned a healed, whole man. And they heard him giving loud praises to God for his healing.

**Spurgeon on glorifying God** - This was a sure sign that he was healed, that he had his voice back; the disease had so thoroughly gone that the sound, which seemed to hide away in his husky throat, now came out clear and loud, like the stroke of a bell. ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**Loud voice** is most often used by Luke, but also commonly used by John in the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Most poignantly **megás + phōnē** is used to describe Jesus' cry from the Cross (Matt. 27:46 Mk 15:34, 37, Lk 23:46).

**Loud voice** - Matt. 27:46; Matt. 27:50; Mk. 1:26 = demon before Jesus; Mk. 5:7 = demon before Jesus; Mk. 15:34, 37; Lk. 1:42 = Elizabeth filled with the Spirit; Lk. 4:33 = demon possessed man; Lk. 8:28 = demon before Jesus; Lk. 17:15; Lk. 19:37 = crowd as Jesus approached Jerusalem at the "triumphal entry"; Lk. 23:23 = voices calling for Jesus' crucifixion, Lk 23:46; Jn. 11:43 = Jesus' calling of Lazarus from the dead; Acts 7:57; Acts 7:60 = Stephen as he died, crying out to Jesus; Acts 8:7; Acts 14:10; Acts 16:28; Acts 26:24; Rev. 1:10; Rev. 5:2; Rev. 5:12; Rev. 6:10; Rev. 7:2; Rev. 7:10; Rev. 8:13; Rev. 10:3; Rev. 11:12; 15. 19. Rev. 12:10; Rev. 14:2. 7; Rev. 14:9; Rev. 14:15; Rev. 16:1; Rev. 16:17; Rev. 19:1; Rev. 19:17; Rev. 21:3

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**Healed (2390) (iaomai)** means to cure, to heal, to restore and is used literally of deliverance from physical diseases and afflictions and so to make whole as occurred to these 10 lepers. Figuratively the verb **iaomai** can speak of deliverance from sin and its consequences and thus to restore to spiritual good health as in (Mt 13:15, 1 Pe 2:24-note where "you were healed" is not physical but spiritual healing). When used in the figurative and spiritual sense **iaomai** has much the same meaning as **sozo**, to save, make whole, restore to spiritual health. Here are the uses of **iaomai** used with a spiritual meaning = Mt 13:15, John 12:40, Acts 28:27 - preceding quotes from Isa 6:10, 1Pe 2:24 = quote from Isa 53:5. But as we discuss below in Luke 17:19, the healing referred to by Luke is literal physical healing from leprosy.

**iaomai** is used 26x in 26v most often by Dr Luke. Presumably the fact that Luke was a physician explains why he made frequent use of **iaomai** (14/26x). The related word **iatros** (Mt 9:12 Mk 2:17 5:26 Lk 4:23, 5:31, 8:43, Col 4:14) is derived from **iaomai** and is actually the word used for "medical doctor" in modern Greece (cf English "**iatrogenic**" illness or malady caused by or secondary to medical treatment!) In ancient Greece this word group was extended from its medical use to convey a sense of restoration or to making good. The word **iatros** is also ascribed to several Grecian deities (Here is an interesting background article = [Healing deities, healing cults](#)).

Mt. 8:8; Mt. 8:13; Mt. 13:15; Mt. 15:28; Mk. 5:29; Lk. 5:17; Lk. 6:18; Lk. 6:19; Lk. 7:7; Lk. 8:47; Lk. 9:2; Lk. 9:11; Lk. 9:42; Lk. 14:4; Lk. 17:15; Lk. 22:51; Jn. 4:47; Jn. 5:13; Jn. 12:40; Acts 9:34; Acts 10:38; Acts 28:8; Acts 28:27; Heb. 12:13; Jas. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:24.

**Turned back (5290) (hupostrepho)** from **hupo** = under + **strepho** = to turn, to change) means to turn back from or to return, going back to a location, in this case going back to Jesus.

**Hupostrepho** - 35v - **return(6), returned(22), returning(3), started back(1), turn away(1), turned back(1), went back(1)**. Lk. 1:56; Lk. 2:20; Lk. 2:43; Lk. 2:45; Lk. 4:1; Lk. 4:14; Lk. 7:10; Lk. 8:37; Lk. 8:39; Lk. 8:40; Lk. 9:10; Lk. 10:17; Lk. 11:24; Lk. 17:15; Lk. 17:18; Lk. 19:12; Lk. 23:48; Lk. 23:56; Lk. 24:9; Lk. 24:33; Lk. 24:52; Acts 1:12; Acts 8:25; Acts 8:28; Acts 12:25; Acts 13:13; Acts 13:34; Acts 14:21; Acts 20:3; Acts 21:6; Acts 22:17; Acts 23:32; Gal. 1:17; Heb. 7:1; 2 Pet. 2:21

**Glorifying (1392) (doxazo)** from **doxa** = glory) has a secular meaning of to think, suppose, be of opinion, (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Xenophon, Plato, Thucydides) but generally is not used in this sense in Scripture. **Doxazo** means to praise, honor or magnify (Mt 5:16; 6:2; Lk 5:25f; Ac 11:18; Ro 11:13; 1 Cor 12:26; 1 Pt 4:16) The simple definition of glorifying is that he was giving a correct opinion, a correct estimate of God. His actions in the next verse testify to this fact (fell...thanked). The [present tense](#) indicates this one healed leper was constantly glorifying God.

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**Gratitude for God's Blessing** The leper who was healed fell at Jesus' feet to thank Him (Luke 17:15-16).

Application: Bowing before God can be a response to His goodness, provision, and answered prayers.

Practical Step: After witnessing God's provision or deliverance, take time to kneel or bow and offer heartfelt thanks.

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**Not Even A Nod**

Read: Luke 17:11-19

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God. —Luke 17:15

Traffic was bad and everyone was cranky on that hot afternoon. I noticed a car with two young men waiting to enter traffic from a fast-food restaurant driveway. I thought it was nice when the driver ahead of me let them in.

But when the “nice” driver ahead of me didn’t get a nod or even a thank you wave, he turned ugly. First he rolled down his window and shouted at the driver he had let in. Then he gunned his engine and raced forward as if to ram into his car, honking and yelling as he continued to vent his anger.

Who was “more wrong”? Did the young driver’s ingratitude justify the “nice” driver’s angry response? Was he owed a thank you?

Certainly the 10 lepers Jesus healed owed gratitude to Him. How could only one return to say thank you? I’m struck by Jesus’ response: “Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” (Luke 17:18). If the King of Kings can get only a 1 in 10 response of thanks, how can we expect more from others? Better to do our deeds to honor God and serve others than to do them to collect gratitude. May the grace of God be seen in us even when our kind acts go unappreciated. By Randy Kilgore ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, we like to be recognized for the things we do. Help us to remember that we are not owed any recognition or thanks but that we owe You a lifetime of gratitude for the salvation You offer through Jesus.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may . . . glorify your Father in heaven. —Matthew 5:16

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## The Greatness Of Gratitude

Read: Luke 17:11-19

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God. —Luke 17:15

Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem when ten lepers approached Him. Standing at a distance, as lepers were required to do, they called to Him: “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” (Luke 17:13).

When Jesus saw them, He commanded, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they journeyed, they were healed.

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back, threw himself at Jesus’ feet, and thanked Him. “Where are the nine?” Jesus asked. Good question.

Jesus referred to the grateful man as a Samaritan - an outsider - perhaps to underscore His saying that “the sons of this world are more shrewd . . . than the sons of light” (Lk 16:8). The word translated “shrewd” means “thoughtful.” Sometimes people of the world have better manners than Jesus’ followers do. (ED: BUT THIS RESPONSE WAS MORE THAN MANNERS. IT WAS EVIDENCE OF A CHANGED HEART!)

In the busyness of life, we may forget to give thanks. Someone has done something for us-given a gift, performed a task, delivered a timely sermon, provided a word of counsel or comfort. But we fail to say thanks. Has someone done something for you this week? Give that friend a call or send a thank-you note. After all, “Love has good manners” (1 Corinthians 13:5 Phillips). By David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We thank You, Lord, for blessings  
You give us on our way;  
May we for these be grateful,  
And praise You every day. -Roworth

We don't need more to be thankful for-we just need to be more thankful.

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## Why Me?

Read: Luke 17:11-19

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God. —Luke 17:15

A few years ago, an unkempt, poorly adjusted youth named Tim (not his real name) was converted to Christ in an evangelistic crusade. A few days later, still unkempt but bathed in the love of Christ, he was sent to my home so that I could help him find a good

church. And so it was that he began attending mine.

Though Tim needed and received much loving help in personal grooming and basic social graces, one characteristic has remained unchanged—his untamed love for his Savior.

One Sunday after church Tim rushed to my side, looking somewhat perplexed. He lamented, “Why me? I keep asking myself, why me?” Oh, no, I thought, he’s become another complaining Christian. Then with arms outstretched, he went on to say, “Out of all the people in the world who are greater and smarter than I am, why did God choose me?” With that he joyfully clapped his hands.

Over the years I’ve heard many Christians, including myself, ask “Why me?” during tough times. But Tim is the first one I’ve heard ask that question when talking about God’s blessings. Many were converted the same night as Tim, but I wonder how many among them have humbly asked, “Why me?” May we ask it often. By Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I know not why God’s wondrous grace  
To me He hath made known;  
Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love  
Redeemed me for His own.  
—Whittle

Gratitude should be a continuous attitude, not an occasional incident.

**Luke 17:16 and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan.**

**KJV Luke 17:16** And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

- **he fell on his face at His feet** Luke 5:8; Genesis 17:3; Matthew 2:11; Mark 5:33; John 5:23; Acts 10:25,26; Revelation 4:10; 5:14; Revelation 19:4,5,10
- **And he was a Samaritan** Luke 9:52-56; 10:32-35; John 4:9,21,22,39-42; 8:48; Acts 1:8; 8:5-25
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:11-19 How to Respond to God's Blessings](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:11-19 Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#) - John MacArthur

## THE SAMARITAN WORSHIPS JESUS

**And he fell on his face at His feet** - The healed man is still praising God as he fell on his face at the feet of Jesus. It follows that in effect he is glorifying Jesus as God! And notice that Jesus did not tell him *not* to fall down before Him. In this case Jesus received the healed man's worship. The verb for **fell** is **pipto** used by Matthew to describe the "wise men" who **fell (pipto)** to the ground and worshiped ([proskuneo](#)) the newborn Jesus. In Mt 4:9 Satan tempted Jesus declaring "'All these things I will give You, if You **fall down (pipto)** and worship ([proskuneo](#)) me.'" In Rev 5:14 John writes "the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders **fell down (pipto)** and worshiped ([proskuneo](#))" before the Lamb and Him Who sits on the throne. In Rev 19:4 "the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures **fell down (pipto)** and worshiped ([proskuneo](#)) God." So clearly falling down before God is associated with worship of God, leaving no doubt that the healed leper was worshipping Jesus as God.

**MacArthur on glorifying God with a loud voice...fell on his face** - This is Luke's way of expressing the idea of great emotion; it just burst forth in a loud voice. The healed leper comes back at the top of his lungs glorifying God, signifying that he knew from where the power to heal had come. He knew who had healed him and he knew Jesus was more than a mere man and so he fell on his face at His feet and worships Him....He knew he was in the presence of God. ([Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#))

**Spurgeon on fell on his face** - When I read these words just now, I thought, that is where I would like to be, and that is what I would like to do, all my life, to fall down, "at his feet, giving him thanks." ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

Perhaps the 9 thought they were going to worship God when they got to the Temple but as **MacArthur** points out "God doesn't dwell in that temple. God hadn't been in that temple in a long, long time. *Ichabod* was written on that temple long ago when the glory departed. That was an apostate temple and an apostate form of religion. And that's why Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "'Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 22 "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 "But an hour is coming, and now is,



when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. 24“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4:21-24)...Most significantly this healed leper knew where to worship God,, i.e., where God really dwelt...which was in Jesus Christ. He was the real temple, the true temple of God (cf John 2:19-21). He recognizes that wherever the compassion of God is, that is where God is, that wherever the power of God is, that is where God is and wherever the grace of God is, that is where God is....God doesn't dwell in Jerusalem, He dwells in Jesus. And he knows it. And he also knows that God offers more than just a physical healing. That is only a temporal detail. He returns not just to be thankful for a healing but to seek what his soul really desired and needed, that is salvation. How do I know that? Because that's exactly what Jesus gave him (see Lk 17:19+)."

**Giving thanks (eucharisteo) to Him. And he was a Samaritan**- He shows no restraint in his thanksgiving. This verb is in the [present tense](#), signifying that the leper was overflowing with thanksgiving to Jesus, the source of the gift of healing from leprosy. **Thanksgiving** expresses what ought never to be absent from any of our devotions. We should always be ready to express our grateful acknowledgement to God for His past mercies. **A Samaritan** associating the other 9 who were presumably Jews was an association borne out of necessity for they were all untouchables and outcasts. The Samaritans were descendants of colonists whom the Assyrian kings planted in Palestine after the fall of the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C. They were despised by the Jews because of their mixed Gentile blood and their different worship, which centered at Mount Gerizim (Jn 4:20-22).

**Spurgeon on he was a Samaritan** - Ah, me! nine of the seed of Israel were ungrateful, and only one poor outcast Gentile was grateful to the Lord for the miracle of healing that had been wrought....One of those off-casts and out-casts that the Jews would not own, — one of the men that they said were of a mongrel breed, — only half Israelite and half idolater. “O grace, it is thy want, Into unlikeliest hearts to come!” ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**MacArthur on Samaritans** - According to John 4:9 the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, they hated each other. Samaritans had intermarried with Gentiles and from a Jewish standpoint polluted their race, polluted their religion. They had a strange, hybrid religion on Mount Gerizim and were despised by the Jews who had no relationships with them. Surely no one would expect God to heal a Samaritan.

**Spurgeon** - He was probably the only one out of the ten that was a Samaritan. Though Jews and Samaritans did not usually agree, yet, as sorrow brings a man strange bedfellows, so in this case, these partners in a general sorrow forgot their sectarianism, and were blended into one sad company. Now that they were all healed, only one felt true gratitude to God, and to his Benefactor: “and he was a Samaritan.” It is very singular to notice that Luke tells us that this man glorified God “with a loud voice.” We have sometimes heard complaints that, at certain revival meetings, the singing was very loud and there was even shouting. Let the converts shout, brother, let them stout! They have good reason to shout, for Christ has made them whole. We have a great deal too much of respectable death about us, let us have a little even noisy life. I would sooner by half hear the praises of God shouted with a loud voice, than hear the mockery of praise in a tone that is scarcely to be heard, while some machine grinds out music to God's glory, and men forget to sing or are drowned in loud bursts of wind from the instrument. Do not be ashamed to let it be known that you are saved. Praise the Lord with all your might; and, if they say that you are excited, tell them that you are, and that you wonder if anybody could help being excited if he had been healed of leprosy or had his sins forgiven. But, at the same time, note the humility as well as the zeal of this man: he “fell down on his face at his feet.” I would like to see more of this action. In some revivals, there is plenty of shouting, but very little falling down on the face at Christ's feet. Oh, for deep prostration of spirit, a humble waiting upon God, a gracious, tender confession of thanks to him for all that he has done for poor leprous sinners! ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

#### Resources:

- [Who were the Samaritans?](#)
- Wikipedia [Samaritans](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Samaria, Samaritans](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Samaria, Samaritans](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Samaritans](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Samaritans](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Samaritans](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Samaritans](#)

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**Giving thanks (2168)(eucharisteo)** from **eucháristos** = thankful, grateful, well-pleasing - Indicates the obligation of being thankful to someone for a favor done <> in turn from **eú** = well + **charizomai** = to grant, give.; English - Eucharist) means to show that one is under obligation by being thankful. To show oneself as grateful (most often to God in the NT). **Eucharisteo** is a word that at its very core (**eu** = good + **charis** = grace) means to acknowledge how **good grace** is!

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## Luke 17:17 Then Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine—where are they?”

**KJV Luke 17:17** And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

- **But the nine—where are they** Genesis 3:9; Psalms 106:13; John 8:7-10; Romans 1:21
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:11-19 How to Respond to God's Blessings](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:11-19 Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#) - John MacArthur

### GRATEFUL HEART OF ONE MAN

**Were there not ten cleansed ([katharizo](#)) ? But the nine—where are they?** - Both of these questions are rhetorical (for effect) because Jesus knew the answers. The third rhetorical question is in the following verse. The first question expects an affirmative answer. It was as if Jesus was saying "There were 10 lepers cleansed, weren't there?"

**Henry Morris on the nine** - The Lord takes note of both those who thank Him and those who do not (compare Luke 7:44-46). He actually seeks those who will worship him (John 4:23). (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

## Luke 17:18 “Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?”

**KJV Luke 17:18** There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

- **to give** Ps 29:1,2; 50:23; 106:13; Isaiah 42:12; Revelation 14:7
- **except** Matthew 8:10,12; 15:24-28; 19:30; 20:16
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:11-19 How to Respond to God's Blessings](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:11-19 Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#) - John MacArthur

**Was no one found who returned ([hupostrepho](#)), to give glory ([doxa](#)) to God, except this foreigner** (allogenes) - Jesus must have asked this question with a note of sadness. Jesus called him a foreigner because he was not Jewish. What a testimony against the Jews that here and in the story in Luke 10:33+, the only one that responded in a godly manner was a despised half-breed Samaritan. "Often those who are thought to be the worst of people turn out the best. Many of the most precious pearls have been found in the deepest sea; and some of the most grateful hearts have been discovered among those who were most immersed in sin and error." ([Spurgeon](#)) The failure of the 9 Jews to return and give thanks and worship Jesus reminds us of John's words in

"He (Jesus) came to His own (the Jews), and those who were His own did not receive Him (did not believe in him like this Samaritan had done). 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:11-13<sup>+</sup>)

**Henry Morris** - The one thankful ex-leper was a Samaritan (Luke 17:16), just as was the caring traveler in Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:33). Jesus also went out of His way to speak to the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:9) and to instruct His apostles to witness to the Samaritans as well as to the Jews (Acts 1:8). (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

The only one who returned to Jesus was a **foreigner**, who Paul would classify with the Gentiles writing "Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands— 12 remember that you were at that time **separate from** Christ, **excluded** from the commonwealth of Israel, and **strangers** ([xenos](#)) to the covenants of promise, **having no hope** and **without God** in the world. (Eph 2:11-12+)

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**Glory** ([1391](#)) **doxa** from **dokeo** = to think) in simple terms means to give a proper opinion or estimate of something. Glory is something that is a source of honor, fame, or admiration. It describes renown, a thing that is beautiful, impressive, or worthy of praise. It follows that the **glory** of God expresses all that He is in His Being and in His nature, character, power and acts. He is glorified when He is allowed to be seen as He really is. To be where God is will be glory. To be what God intended will be glory. To do what God purposed will be glory.

**Doxa in Luke and Acts** - Lk. 2:9; Lk. 2:14; Lk. 2:32; Lk. 4:6; Lk. 9:26; Lk. 9:31; Lk. 9:32; Lk. 12:27; Lk. 14:10; Lk. 17:18; Lk. 19:38; Lk. 21:27; Lk. 24:26; Acts 7:2; Acts 7:55; Acts 12:23; Acts 22:11

**Foreigner (241)** (**allogenes** from **allos** = another of a different kind + **genos** = race) means foreign, alien, of another race, kinship group. **Allogenes** or "foreigner," was written on the outer wall of the temple forbidding any foreigner from access to the Temple precincts, the areas only allowed for the Jews. There was a Court of the Gentiles, but the non-Jews could not go anywhere beyond that barrier. This is the only use ([Hapax legomenon](#))

**Luke 17:19 And He said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith has made you well."**

BGT Luke 17:19 καὶ ἐπὶ αὐτὸν ἔειπεν· ἄριστος πορεύου· ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε.

KJV Luke 17:19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

NET Luke 17:19 Then he said to the man, "Get up and go your way. Your faith has made you well."

CSB Luke 17:19 And He told him, "Get up and go on your way. Your faith has made you well."

ESV Luke 17:19 And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

NIV Luke 17:19 Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

NLT Luke 17:19 And Jesus said to the man, "Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you. "

NRS Luke 17:19 Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

YLT Luke 17:19 and he said to him, 'Having risen, be going on, **thy faith hath saved thee.**'

GWN Luke 17:19 Jesus told the man, "Get up, and go home! Your faith has made you well."

NKJ Luke 17:19 And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

NAB Luke 17:19 Then he said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith has saved you."

MIT Luke 17:19 He said to the Samaritan, "Arise and go. Your faith delivered you."

NJB Luke 17:19 And he said to the man, 'Stand up and go on your way. **Your faith has saved you.**'

ASV Luke 17:19 And he said unto him, Arise, and go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

DBY Luke 17:19 And he said to him, Rise up and go thy way: thy faith has made thee well.

BBE Luke 17:19 And he said to him, Get up, and go on your way; your faith has made you well.

NAS Luke 17:19 And He said to him, "Rise, and go your way; your faith has made you well."

NIRV Luke 17:19 Then Jesus said to him, "Get up and go. Your faith has healed you."

RSV Luke 17:19 And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

RWB Luke 17:19 And he said to him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee well.

WEB Luke 17:19 And he said to him, Arise, depart: thy faith hath made thee whole.

- **Your faith** Luke 7:50; 8:48; 18:42; Matthew 9:22; Mark 5:34; 10:52
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:11-19 How to Respond to God's Blessings](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:11-19 Ten Men Healed, One Man Saved](#) - John MacArthur

## SAVING FAITH

**And He said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith ([pistis](#)) has made you well ([sozo](#))-- Faith ([pistis](#))** describes belief directed toward a person or thing, in this case conviction or belief that Jesus was the Messiah. We see this same sense in Mt 9:2 "And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their **faith**, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven. (cf Mt 9:6)" In Luke 5:20 Jesus "Seeing their (to those lowering the paralyzed man to Jesus - Lk 5:19) **faith**, He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you." And note this man had the same reaction as the leper "And at once he rose up before them, and took up what he had been lying on, and went home, **glorifying God.**" (Lk 5:25+)

The English translation of **made well** misses a critical truth in this section. Why? Because all 10 were made well physically, but only one was made well spiritually! In Luke 17:15 the verb is **iaomai** which in the context speaks of physical healing. But here in Lk 17:19 the verb is **sozo** which clearly speaks of spiritual healing. In short, the Samaritan has been saved by grace through **faith** (Eph 2:8-9). It is interesting that most of the modern versions (NAS, NIV, ESV, NLT, CSB, NET) while translating "**made you well**" also have a marginal note "**has saved you.**" Admittedly, there are some contexts in which **sozo** can mean something less than salvation, but in this context it is obvious that Luke is describing salvation. It is also notable that **sozo** is in the perfect tense, signifying action in the past with continuing or abiding effect.

**MacArthur** on your **faith** - You see in this man trust and gratitude and humility and commitment and love and praise and worship, all components of a **faith** that's way beyond the other nine. It's a faith that embraces Jesus as God, as Lord. It's a faith that bows humbly in recognition of one's lowliness in His presence. It's a faith that Jesus says saves.

**Morris** on **made you well** (KJV = Made thee whole) - the one leper was made whole; the other nine were cleansed outwardly, but the grateful Samaritan had saving faith and was healed inwardly also. (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Spurgeon** on **made thee whole** - Christ uses the word "whole" in an emphatic sense: "Not only thy body, but thy soul also is made whole, and thou art holy from this day." There is a wonderful connection between these two words "whole" and "holy." A holy man is a whole man, and he who is not holy is unsound, and not whole in the sight of God. The Lord make us wholly holy for Christ's sake! Amen. May the Lord Jesus thus speak to many a poor, leprous sinner here tonight! "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." ([Luke 17](#) - exposition)

**MacArthur** feels the other 9 that were healed and did not return were **illustrative of the Jews in general** writing that "the ungrateful nine illustrate the general attitude of the Jews, we'll take everything You give, we'll take all the benefits, we'll take all the miracles, just don't expect worship. The one Samaritan is a picture of the outcasts, the **remnant**, the ten percent, like Isaiah 6:13, the tenth that will believe (see doctrine of the **remnant**). The grateful Samaritan is a picture of the outcasts who believed in Jesus. This was like the Samaritan woman in John 4:1-30, might be Jews who were tax collectors and sinners, the riff-raff, the scum, the thugs, the lowlifes, the prostitutes who surrounded Jesus and of whom He said He had come to call the sinners not the righteous (Lk 5:32+). Everybody heard the message. Everybody enjoyed the benefit of Jesus' power. Everybody basked in the wonder of His teaching and His miracles. But only a few came, fell at His feet, glorified Him as God, worshiped Him, humbled themselves, and offered Him thanks. The majority, they were the takers. Only a small group gave Him worship. The majority were content with "fixing their life up," being content with that which was temporal, unconcerned about the eternal. Only a small group wanted Him to change their souls and transform their hearts. So the warning is that you can experience the goodness and common grace of God, as does the whole world. God makes the sun rise on all of us, the rain to fall on the just and the unjust (Acts 24:15KJV+). He is good to all men. You can be blessed by God in an earthly sense. You can be even blessed to hear the stories of Jesus and Gospel truth but then say I'll take what I get. I'll take my life because I like it the way it is. God gave it to me, so yes I will thank God for it. We hear people say that all the time -- thank God that I'm healthy, thank God that I have my children, thank God for my job, etc. But you can thank God and still walk away right into eternal hell. Or you can come back and fall on your face before Jesus Christ and embrace Him as your Master and Savior." ([Ten Men Healed. One Man Saved](#))

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**Faith** ([4102](#)) **pistis** is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything, but in Scripture usually speaks of belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it. Note that this discussion of **pistis** is only an overview and not a detailed treatise of this vitally important subject. Those interested are directed to respected, conservative books on systematic theology for more in depth discussion (**pistis** = noun, **pistos** = adjective, **pisteuo** = verb)

**Grudem - Saving faith** is trust in Jesus Christ as a living person for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life with God. This definition emphasizes that saving faith is not just a belief in facts but personal trust in Jesus to save me... The definition emphasizes personal trust in Christ, not just belief in facts about Christ. Because saving faith in Scripture involves this personal trust, the word "trust" is a better word to use in contemporary culture than the word "faith" or "belief." The reason is that we can "believe" something to be true with no personal commitment or dependence involved in it. ([Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine also online](#) is an excellent, uncompromising, imminently readable resource for the lay person. Go to Chapter 35 on page 616 of the pdf for discussion of the vital question "What is saving faith?")

It has well been said that **faith** is not believing in spite of evidence—that's superstition—but obeying in spite of circumstances and consequences.

As **pistis** relates to God, it is the conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things well as

the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ. As faith relates to Christ it represents a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through Whom we obtain eternal salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. Stated another way, eternal salvation comes **only** through belief in Jesus Christ and no other way.

**Swindoll** on **pistis** - This word denotes confidence in the reliability of a person or thing and can describe one's trust in a person's word, a compact or treaty, or a deity (or deities). The term implies both knowledge and action. One may receive knowledge of a certain truth and may even offer verbal agreement, but "trust" or "confidence" is not said to be present until one's behavior reflects that truth. In the Hellenistic period, this word came to connote the conviction that gods do exist and are active. The Greeks worshiped and feared their gods, but they did not have a relationship with them. NT readers, however, would also have known the word from the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament), where it—and related words, like **pisteuo**, "to believe," "to accept as truth," "to commit one's trust"—is linked to the relationship with Israel's covenant-keeping God. For the Jew, and therefore the Christian, **pistis** became a description of the means by which someone relates to God—so much so that the participial form came to designate members of the church as "believers" (e.g., [Acts 2:44](#); [4:32](#); [5:14](#)). ([Insights on Luke](#))

**Made you well** ([4982](#)) (**sozo**) has the basic meaning of rescuing one from great peril. Additional nuances include to protect, keep alive, preserve life, deliver, heal, be made whole. **Sozo** is sometimes used of physical deliverance from danger of perishing (see Mt 8:25; Mt 14:30; Lk 23:35; Acts 27:20, 27:31), physical healing from sickness (Mt 9:21, 22; Mk 5:23, Acts 4:9), and deliverance from demonic possession (Lk 8:36). More often **sozo** refers to **salvation** in a spiritual sense as illustrated in the following passages: Matthew recorded the angel's conversation with Joseph declaring "She (Mary) will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will **save** (**sozo**) His people from their sins." (Mt 1:21+) In Mt 1:21 **sozo** is equated with deliverance from sins (guilt and power of) with Jesus' Name being a transliteration of Joshua meaning "Jehovah is salvation".

In Mt 9:22 we see **sozo** translated as in Luke 17:19 "But Jesus turning and seeing her said, "Daughter, take courage; your **faith** has **made you well** (**sozo**)." At once the woman **was made well** (**sozo**)."

Luke's other uses of **sozo**...

Luke 7:48-50 Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven." 49 Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who even forgives sins?" And He said to the woman, "Your **faith** has **saved** (**sozo**) you; go in peace."

Luke 8:12 "Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and **be saved** (**sozo**).

Luke 8:36 Those who had seen it reported to them how the man who was demon-possessed **had been made well** (**sozo**).

Luke 8:48 And He said to her, "Daughter, your **faith has made you well** (**sozo**); go in peace."

Luke 8:50 But when Jesus heard this, He answered him, "Do not be afraid any longer; only **believe**, and she **will be made well** (**sozo**)."

Luke 9:24 "For whoever wishes to **save** (**sozo**) his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will **save** (**sozo**) it.

Luke 9:56 for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but **to save** (**sozo**) them." And they went on to another village.

Luke 13:23 And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who **are being saved** (**sozo**)?" And He said to them,

Luke 18:26 They who heard it said, "Then who can **be saved** (**sozo**)?"

Luke 18:42 And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your **faith has made you well** (**sozo**)."

Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man has come to seek and **to save** (**sozo**) that which was lost."

Luke 23:35 And the people stood by, looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, "He **saved** (**sozo**) others; let Him **save** (**sozo**) Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One."

Luke 23:37 and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, **save** (**sozo**) Yourself!"

Luke 23:39 One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the



Christ? **Save** ([sozo](#)) Yourself and us!" (cf Lk 23:40-42, 43)

**Luke's uses of sozo in Acts** - Acts 2:21; Acts 2:40; Acts 2:47; Acts 4:9; Acts 4:12; Acts 11:14; Acts 14:9; Acts 15:1; Acts 15:11; Acts 16:30; Acts 16:31; Acts 27:20; Acts 27:31

**Luke 17:20 Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed;**

**KJV Luke 17:20** And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

- **when the kingdom of God was coming** Luke 10:11; 16:16; 19:11; Acts 1:6,7
- **with signs to be observed** Luke 17:23,24; Daniel 2:44; Zechariah 4:6; John 18:36
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:20-21 The Invisible Kingdom of God, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 17:20-21 The Invisible Kingdom of God, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Luke 6:20; And turning His gaze toward His disciples, He began to say, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the **kingdom of God**.

Luke 11:20 "But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the **kingdom of God** has come upon you.

### WHEN IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD COMING?

**Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming-** This is not a bad question, although it originates in this case from a group of men who are generally bad! The Jews in general were looking for the Kingdom of God. They knew it was coming from the Old Testament and from the rabbim had taught. And as MacArthur says they were all "[premillennialists](#)!" And why would they ask Jesus about the timing of the Kingdom of God? One reason of course is because He had repeatedly made reference to the Kingdom of God (Kingdom of Heaven) As with all who do not have spiritual eyes to see, the Pharisees missed the fact that the kingdom had already come in the sense that the King was present.

**Steven Cole** - We can't be sure whether the Pharisees were questioning Jesus in a hostile sense or not. Given their track record, they may well have been asking skeptically, "When is the kingdom coming?" The general Jewish belief was that the kingdom of God would begin with a bang, with a powerful Messiah establishing His rule in Israel and delivering the nation from her enemies. But here is this carpenter from nowhere with His ragtag band of fishermen, and there is no sign that He is going to defeat the Romans and usher in the glorious new age. Sure, there were some miracles, but where is the clear evidence that He is establishing His kingdom rule? ([The Present and Future Kingdom](#))

And so it is as if the Pharisees were saying "Okay, you have been talking about the Kingdom of God. We are ready for it to come. When is it coming? You have not done any of the signs that we have been taught that would accompany the coming of the Kingdom of God!"

In Luke 19:11 we read of their expectation that the Messiah was going to inaugurate the Kingdom of God on earth -

"While they were listening to these things, Jesus went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and **they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately**." (See in depth comments on the **Kingdom of God** in notes on Lk 19:11+).

This was the prevalent Jewish expectation (or at least certainly their hope) in Jesus' day -- the **Kingdom of God** was going to appear immediately. And this expectation explains the events that accompanied His "Triumphal Entry" ([see significance of this entry](#)) into Jerusalem described by the writers of the Gospels.

**Matthew** recorded...This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: 5 "SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, 'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.'" 6 The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, 7 and brought the donkey and the colt, and

laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats. 8 Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. 9 The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David; **BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD**; [Hosanna](#) (Save us now) in the highest!" 10 When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" 11 And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee." (Mt 21:4-11)

**Luke** recorded

They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their coats on the colt and put Jesus on it. 36 As He was going, they were spreading their coats on the road. 37 As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, 38 shouting: "**BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD**; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" 39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." 40 But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!" 41 When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, (Lk 19:35-41-note)

Matthew quotes Zechariah's prophecy that Israel's **King** was **coming** (Zechariah 9:9), but notice He was coming on a **donkey** not on a white horse like a conquering general. He will come that way the Second Time (Rev 19:11-16), but not in His first Coming. But the Jews for the most part did not see Messiah's two comings! Luke's version emphasizes that the Jews welcomed Jesus as **King** Who would establish the Kingdom of God.

**Having been questioned** (1905)(**eperotao** from **epí** = an intens. + **erōtāō** = to ask, inquire of, beg of) in the NT means "to interrogate, inquire" (Zodhiates).

**Friberg** says **eperotao** means (1) of inquiry in general ask, put a question, inquire (Mk 9.32, 33); (2) as a legal technical term interrogate, examine, question (Acts 5.27); (3) as seeking to know God ask after, desire to know (Ro 10.20); (4) as making a request for something ask for, demand (Mt 16.1)

**Gilbrant** on **eperotao** - In classical Greek usage **eperōtāō** (from **epi** + **erōtāō**) means "to consult or put a question to someone." In later Greek it is a more technical term used for asking a formal question either at a meeting or in the process of making a contract or accepting the terms of a treaty. In Greek religion **eperōtāō** means "to put a question or a request to a god" (cf. Bauer). The Septuagint uses **eperōtāō** to translate **shā'al**, "to ask." It occurs most generally in the historical books (e.g., 2 Sa 2:1; 1 Chr 10:13; cf. Jer 21:2). In the New Testament **eperōtāō** is used 56 times and is most frequently found in Mark. It carries the basic sense of "to ask," but three nuances of meaning are found: (1) asking or seeking after something, like a sign (Matthew 16:1; Romans 10:20); (2) probing someone for something, such as the judicial examination (with investigation) and counterquestioning that the Pharisees used with Jesus (Mt 22:35; Mk 12:28); (3) approaching an authority for answers (Luke 2:46; 9:45; 1 Corinthians 14:35). **Eperōtāō** may indicate intensity since it can mean "demanding" rather than just "asking" (**erōtāō**). Thus **erōtāō** is translated "to pray," but **eperōtāō** is not. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Eperotao** - 55x in 55v - ask(5), ask...question(1), ask...questions(1), asked(14), asked...a question(1), asking(2), asking...questions(1), question(3), questioned(18), questioning(9). Matt. 12:10; Matt. 16:1; Matt. 17:10; Matt. 22:23; Matt. 22:35; Matt. 22:41; Matt. 22:46; Matt. 27:11; Mk. 5:9; Mk. 7:5; Mk. 7:17; Mk. 8:23; Mk. 8:27; Mk. 8:29; Mk. 9:11; Mk. 9:16; Mk. 9:21; Mk. 9:28; Mk. 9:32; Mk. 9:33; Mk. 10:2; Mk. 10:10; Mk. 10:17; Mk. 11:29; Mk. 12:18; Mk. 12:28; Mk. 12:34; Mk. 13:3; Mk. 14:60; Mk. 14:61; Mk. 15:2; Mk. 15:4; Mk. 15:44; Lk. 2:46; Lk. 3:10; Lk. 3:14; Lk. 6:9; Lk. 8:9; Lk. 8:30; Lk. 9:18; Lk. 17:20; Lk. 18:18; Lk. 18:40; Lk. 20:21; Lk. 20:28; Lk. 20:40; Lk. 21:7; Lk. 22:64; Lk. 23:6; Lk. 23:9; Jn. 18:7; Acts 5:27; Acts 23:34; Rom. 10:20; 1 Co. 14:35

**Eperotao** - 74 verses Ge 24:23; Ge 26:7; Ge 38:21; Ge 43:7; Nu 23:3; Nu 23:15; Nu 27:21; Dt. 4:32; Dt. 18:11; Dt. 32:7; Jos. 9:14; Jdg. 1:1; Jdg. 8:14; Jdg. 18:5; Jdg. 20:18; Jdg. 20:23; Jdg. 20:27; Jdg. 20:28; 1 Sa 9:9; 1 Sa 10:22; 1 Sa 14:37; 1 Sa 23:2; 1 Sa 28:6; 1 Sa 28:16; 1 Sa 30:8; 2 Sa 2:1; 2 Sa 5:23; 2 Sa 11:7; 2 Sa 14:18; 2 Sa 16:23; 2 Sa 20:18; 1 Ki. 12:24; 1 Ki. 22:5; 1 Ki. 22:7; 1 Ki. 22:8; 2 Ki. 1:2; 2 Ki. 8:6; 1 Chr. 10:13; Job 8:8; Job 12:7; Ps. 137:3; Prov. 17:28; Eccl. 7:10; Isa. 19:3; Isa. 30:2; Isa. 65:1; Jer. 21:2; Jer. 30:14; Ezek. 14:7; Ezek. 14:10; Ezek. 20:1; Ezek. 20:3; Ezek. 21:21; Da 2:10; Da 2:11; Da 2:27; Hos. 4:12; Hag. 2:11; Zech. 4:4; Zech. 4:12

**He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed-** At first hearing, this statement might seem confusing because clearly Jesus did many signs and wonders as described by all four Gospel writers. But these were not the signs the Pharisees (or the nation as a whole) were looking for -- they were looking for signs in the heavens, cataclysmic

signs, great signs about which their OT prophecies had written, signs that would precede the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. To fully grasp what the Pharisees were asking and what Jesus answered you must understand the context, specifically the eschatological beliefs of the Jews of the first century. As described below John MacArthur summarizes this eschatological context. The point of Jesus' reply to the Pharisees is that they had wrongly interpreted the OT eschatology, especially regarding earth shaking signs. Yes, the Kingdom had come (the King was present) but it was a spiritual kingdom and not a visible kingdom and that is what the Pharisees and most of the Jews missed.

**John MacArthur** describes what the first century Jews (not just the Pharisees but the nation as a whole) were expecting in the future for the nation of Israel. It is especially notable that they were looking for and expecting a visible Kingdom of God. "And with Jesus' repeated mentions of the **Kingdom** and the phrase the **Kingdom of God**, the Jews were hoping that He would bring in the **Kingdom**. Notice how several times they try to crown Him king. Why did they do this? Because they thought from His words and actions that He was the King of the **visible Kingdom** they were looking for. And of course they were correct that Jesus was the King, but they did not understand that first He had to be received by faith as King of their hearts, **King of an invisible, internal Kingdom**. And recall His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on His last week of life. Because they expected the imminent establishment of the **Kingdom of God**, the Jewish crowds were shouting "BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD" (Lk 19:37-note) The Jews thought that this was His coronation, and when they realized it was not, they called for His crucifixion (Lk 23:21-note)." (Bolding added)

**Kingdom** (392)(**basileia** from **basileus** = a sovereign, king, monarch) denotes sovereignty, royal power, dominion. **Basileia** can also refer to the territory or people over whom a king rules. Matthew used the synonymous phrase the **Kingdom of Heaven** (32x) probably to appeal to the Jews who refused to say the Name of God, as an way to convey their sense of unworthiness.

**Observed** (3907)(**parateresis** from **para** = beside + **tērēsis** = custody, keeping, observance) means close observation, attentive watching (as with one's eyes) or scrutiny. It was used in classic Greek of physicians carefully watching symptoms of a disease, of astronomers observing the motion of heavenly objects, or of a soldier's surveillance of untrustworthy hostages (*Liddell-Scott*). In a related sense the term is used of the careful observance of rules or commandments (*Moulton-Milligan*).

**Wiersbe** adds that **parateresis** means "in classical Greek to observe the future by signs. It carries the idea of spying, lying in wait, and even scientific investigation. The point Jesus made was that God's kingdom would not come with great "outward show" so that people could predict its arrival and plot its progress. The Pharisees' question was legitimate, but it was also tragic; for Jesus had been ministering among them for some three years, and these men were still in spiritual darkness. They did not understand who Jesus was or what He was seeking to accomplish. Their views of the kingdom were political, not spiritual; Jewish, not universal." (Borrow [Be courageous](#) Luke 14-24)

## THE EXPECTATION OF THE JEWS REGARDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD

**MacArthur** gleans much of the following from *The History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ* ([Volume 2 -Topic - The Messianic Hope, here is a cumulative index](#)) written by historian, **Emil Schurer** ([biography](#)) who collected the ancient material from the time of Christ and pieced together the eschatology espoused by the Jews in the first century (see [Schurer's topics covered under "The Messianic Hope"](#))...

**Here is what the Jews expected.**

(1) the coming of Messiah would be preceded be a **time of tribulation or trouble**, even like birth pangs

(**Ed Comment:** Schurer was correct here, and it was not the Roman occupation of the first century, not even the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, which certainly was not followed by the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom. This "time of tribulation" is referred to several times in Scripture =[Great Tribulation](#); [Daniel's Seventieth Week](#); "a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time" = Daniel 12:1-note. See discussion of the "Time of Jacob's Trouble" in note on Jeremiah 30:7; see commentary on Jesus' Olivet Discourse [Matthew 24:15](#) [Matthew 24:16](#) [Matthew 24:17](#) [Matthew 24:18](#) [Matthew 24:19](#) [Matthew 24:20](#) [Matthew 24:21](#)).

(2) in the midst of this trouble and turmoil there would appear a prophet like Elijah, heralding the coming of Messiah (**Ed:** cf the mysterious "two witnesses" in Revelation 11:3ff-note).

(3) Messiah would establish His kingdom, age and glory and vindicate His people.

(4) and they found this in the [Sibylline Oracles](#), the nations would ally to fight the Messiah. They would literally interrupt all of their wars to come and fight against Him (**Ed**: See Revelation 16:14-16-[note](#)).

(5) the Messiah would destroy all the opposing nations, subjugate them all (**Ed**: See Revelation 19:11-21, esp Rev 19:15-[note](#)).

(6) the restoration of Jerusalem would occur. It would be made new and magnificent. (**Ed**: See Zechariah 14:10-11-note)

(7) scattered Jews from all over the world would return to Israel. (**Ed**: Ezekiel 36:24-note)

(8) Israel would become the center of the world and all nations would be subjected to the Messiah. (**Ed**: See Zechariah 14:16-note)

(9) **the Messiah would establish the kingdom** and the kingdom would be a time of eternal peace, righteousness and glory. (**Ed**: See Isaiah 2:2-4-note, Jer 33:15-16-note)

(MacArthur goes on to say) That's pretty accurate. Tribulation, an announcement of the arrival of the Messiah, a prophet before He comes, like Elijah. He comes, the world fights Him. He defeats them. He sets up His kingdom, restores Jerusalem, gathers His people, His sheep from all over the world. Israel becomes the center of the world. Jerusalem the throne from which He reigns. And He goes into a kingdom that is forever, a kingdom of peace, righteousness and glory. That's good eschatology. That's my (John MacArthur's) eschatology. And some people say somebody invented this type of eschatology in the 1800's? These expectations on the part of the Jews were drawn from Old Testament teaching and they were embellished by extra biblical writers. They got a little carried away, but the basic eschatology is fairly sound. And remember, the first century Jews did not see two comings of Messiah but only saw one. Their idea was, all Jesus needed to do was show up and do this (set up the **Kingdom of God**). They did not expect (or understand) that He would come (first) to establish a spiritual kingdom. They were not looking for an internal kingdom, a spiritual kingdom. To put it simply, they were not looking for a Savior because they did not see their need to be saved. And that is why Jesus' message was so offensive. It wasn't that they did not want the kingdom of God. It was not that they didn't like to hear Jesus speak about that kingdom. It was not that they were not looking for a King. But it was the kind of kingdom Jesus was talking about that agitated them.

**The Jews tried on a number of occasions to force Jesus to be a King** And He had to prevent that from happening. In their minds they had experienced enough tribulation, and even now were living through the tribulation. The time was right for the King and the kingdom. They were weary of the subjugation and oppression of a series of conquerors who had occupied their land, currently the Romans. And when Jesus came along, He just could not be the Messiah, for not only did He not conquer the Romans and establish His throne, but where were all the signs in heaven that were to accompany the coming of the Kingdom of God? The Jews had developed an eschatological scheme which taught that there would be signs in the heavens, signs in the earth, cataclysmic events, but not signs like healing or even resurrections and any of the other miracles Jesus was performing. They did not anticipate those "signs" and they simply did not fit into their system of eschatology. And then when Jesus started talking about dying, it was an absolute absurdity because their understanding of the King was that He would come to conquer, not to be conquered (**Ed**: Of course He did conquer Satan, sin and death!). And even the disciples were struggling with their own expectations of this kingdom of God. They knew those covenants in the Old Testament. The Pharisees who asked this question knew all of these prophecies. And they knew that God keeps His Word. They knew that God had to fulfill His promises to Israel. And it just frankly did not look like Jesus was the One to bring about the fulfillment of the prophecies to Israel. ([The Invisible Kingdom of God, Part 1](#))

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- b. Elias as the Forerunner
- c. The Appearing of the Messiah
- d. Last Attack of the Hostile Powers
- e. Destruction of the Hostile Powers
- f. Renovation of Jerusalem
- g. Gathering of the Dispersed
- h. The Kingdom of Glory in Palestine
- i. Renovation of the World
- j. The General Resurrection
- k. The Last Judgment, Eternal Salvation and Condemnation
- l. Appendix—The Suffering Messiah
- Literature

Luke 17:21 nor will they say, ‘**Look**, here it is!’ or, ‘There it is!’ For **behold**, the kingdom of God is in your midst.”

**KJV Luke 17:21** Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, **behold**, the kingdom of God is within you.

- **Look, here it is** Luke 21:8; Matthew 24:23-28; Mark 13:21
- **the kingdom of God** Romans 14:17; Colossians 1:27
- **in your midst** - within you or, among you. Luke 10:9-11; Matthew 12:28; John 1:26

### THE INVISIBLE, INTERNAL, ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD

**Stein** introduces this last section of Luke with some interesting comments - The setting of this material is unspecified, and as the introductory scene reveals, there is no necessary tie with the preceding material. Luke wove this section from various traditional materials and placed it here for reasons other than chronology. Why he placed this material at this point, however, is unclear. The account consists of two different sets of material. The first speaks of the “**already now**” or realized aspect of God’s kingdom (Lk 17:20–21). The second speaks of the “**not yet**” or future aspect of the kingdom (Lk 17:22–37). The two sets of teachings are connected by catchwords: “come” (Lk 17:20)—“is coming” (Lk 17:22); “here it is” or “there it is” (Lk 17:21)—“there he is!” or “here he is!” (Lk 17:23). Similar material is found in Luke 21:7–35-note. ... Within this “**little Lukan apocalypse**” we find side-by-side teachings that demonstrate the twofold nature of God’s kingdom. The realized nature of the kingdom is seen in Luke 17:20–21. In fulfillment of the OT promises God’s kingdom is seen by Jesus and Luke as having already arrived so that the Pharisees’ question in Lk 17:20 reveals the same error as the statement in Lk 14:15. Questions involving the future coming of God’s kingdom must not lose sight of the **already-now dimension** of the kingdom. **Already now** the kingdom has come, and the **future not-yet dimension** of God’s kingdom will be shared only if one **now** enters the kingdom in its present manifestation. (See [Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

**Wiersbe** - The Jewish people lived in an excited atmosphere of expectancy, particularly at the Passover season when they commemorated their deliverance from Egypt. They longed for another Moses who would deliver them from their bondage. Some had hoped that John the Baptist would be the deliverer, and then the attention focused on Jesus (John 6:15). The fact that He was going to Jerusalem excited them all the more (Luke 19:11). Perhaps He would establish the promised kingdom! (Borrow [Be courageous](#) Luke 14-24)

**Nor will they say, ‘Look ([idou](#)), here it is!’ or, ‘There it is!’** - Jesus counters their belief that the **Kingdom of God** would come in an obvious way that would be visible to all to behold (including great signs to behold). To the contrary, God’s kingdom would not be preceded by signs that could be observed. The Pharisees were completely off base regarding their theology of the Kingdom. Then Jesus really rocks their boat with His next declaration.

Jesus had made it very clear what was required to "see" this "invisible" kingdom. Speaking to Nicodemus He said “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot (absolutely continually will not be able to) see the Kingdom of God.” (John 3:3).

Jesus gave a similar explanation in Matthew

Jesus answered them, “To you it has been granted to know (ED: TO “SEE” SPIRITUALLY) the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. 12 “For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. 13 “Therefore I speak to them in parables; because **while seeing they do not see** (THE INVISIBLE SPIRITUAL



KINGDOM), and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 "In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE; 15 FOR ([term of explanation](#) = EXPLAINING WHY THEY CANNOT SEE THE SPIRITUAL, INVISIBLE KINGDOM OF GOD) THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES (SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING), OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.' 16 "But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.

Beloved brother or sister in Christ, does the fact that you can truly see the invisible Kingdom of God not give you indescribable joy and a deep sense of humility that cries "Why me Lord? Why am I so privileged?" How blessed we are as believers to be able to see and understand the Kingdom of God which is shrouded in total mystery to the majority of the people we encounter daily. This should motivate us even more to share the Gospel with them, trusting in the Spirit to "open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light (["I ONCE WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE" listen to this version](#)) and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." (Acts 26:18-[note](#))

Paul echoes the words of Jesus regarding the inability of the unregenerate man to see the Kingdom of God explaining that...

"a natural man does not accept (WELCOME) the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot (ABSOLUTELY IN NOT ABLE TO) understand them, because they are spiritually appraised (YOU MUST HAVE SPIRITUAL EYES TO SEE THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM OF GOD).(1 Cor 2:14-[note](#))

Simply stated, if you do not recognize the King (Jesus) you cannot see the Kingdom of God. However, as explained below, the day will come when even the spiritually blind will see the Visible Kingdom, for they will then behold the Visible King. Sadly, it will be too late to repent at that time. Today is the day of salvation!

**For behold** ([idou](#) = "listen up" "Don't miss this!"), **the kingdom of God is in your midst** - What is Jesus saying? He is saying the Kingdom of God is present now, at the moment He spoke those words. One can only imagine the look of confusion and consternation on the Pharisees and Jews in general when Jesus made this declaration! Even Jesus' own disciples did not comprehend what He was saying and so in Lk 17:37 ask "Where, Lord?" (in context a question related to the Kingdom of God).

**The kingdom of God** - see [note below](#).

**Kingdom** ([932](#))([basileia](#) from **basileus** = a sovereign, king, monarch) denotes sovereignty, royal power, dominion. **Basileia** can also refer to the territory or people over whom a king rules, his sovereign realm. Most of the NT uses refer to the Kingdom of God (Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew's gospel). And as discussed in this section, one needs to understand that the kingdom refers to a present, invisible Kingdom where Jesus is sovereign over believer's hearts and the future, visible kingdom, which John MacArthur explains

Jesus told the disciples in the Upper Room, "Truly I say to you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the **kingdom of God**" (**ED: HE IS REFERRING TO THE FUTURE EARTHLY KINGDOM HE WILL ESTABLISH WHEN HE RETURNS**). (Mark 14:25). At the sheep and goat judgment (**ED: THIS EVENT COINCIDES WITH HIS SECOND COMING AND SHOULD BE DISTINGUISHED FROM THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT 1000 YEARS LATER - Rev 20:11-15-[note](#)**) "the King will say to those on His right [the sheep], 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the **kingdom** prepared for you from the foundation of the world'" (Mt. 25:34), but for those who reject Him "there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when [they] see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the **kingdom of God**, but [they themselves] being thrown out. And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the **kingdom of God**" (Luke 13:28-29). This (**ED: VISIBLE ASPECT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**) refers to our Lord's [millennial reign on earth](#) (Rev. 20:1-6-[note](#)). (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Luke 11-17)

The verb "**is**" (in your midst) is in the [present tense](#) signifying the Kingdom of God was present now, even as Jesus was speaking. But they could not see it! They were waiting and looking for the Kingdom of God (see the [summary of their Jewish Eschatology](#)), but it was continually present now! The Pharisees (and most of the Jews and most of fallen mankind) simply did not have their spiritual eyes opened to be able to see the Kingdom, because at present it is a spiritual Kingdom, not a visible kingdom. When Christ returns as King of kings (Rev 19:11-16-[note](#)), the invisible Kingdom of God will suddenly and forever become a visible Kingdom. In the Revelation John writes of this "visibility"

BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and **every eye** (REGENERATE AND UNREGENERATE) will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

The phrase **in your midst** is not translated as accurately as it could be. A more accurate translation is the kingdom of God is within you. In fact most of the modern Bible translations have a marginal note that says "**within you**" (the more literal translation) and some add "within your grasp" (but I think the latter paraphrase is a bit of a stretch). Some commentaries argue that if it were translated "**in you**" or "**within you**" then it would imply that the Kingdom of God was actually present in the Pharisees, which of course it was not.

**John MacArthur** comments on **in your midst** - Many translators, seeking to avoid the apparent difficulty of Jesus saying that the kingdom was inside the unbelieving Pharisees, translate the phrase in which it appears **in your midst**. However a different phrase, **en mesō**, is regularly used to communicate the idea of "**in the midst of**," or "among" (e.g., Mt. 10:16; Lk 2:46; 8:7; 10:3; 22:27; 24:36; Acts 1:15; 2:22; Heb. 2:12). The apparent difficulty is easily resolved by understanding **your** in the broadest national sense rather than as a narrow reference to the Pharisees. As was inevitably the case, the crowd listening to the Lord's dialogue with the Pharisees ran the gamut from the outright rejecters to the curious but uncommitted, to the true disciples of Jesus. The Lord was reinforcing the point that the spiritual kingdom is internal and not manifested by observable signs. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Luke 11-17)

**Wiersbe** - The statement "the kingdom of God is within you" has challenged Bible translators and interpreters for centuries, and many explanations have been given. One thing we can be sure of is that He was not telling the unbelieving Pharisees that they had the kingdom of God in their hearts! The Greek preposition can mean "within," "among," or "in the midst of." Jesus was saying, "Don't look for the kingdom 'out there' unless it is first in your own heart" (see Rom. 14:17). At the same time, He may also have been saying, "The fact that I am here in your midst is what is important, for I am the King. How can you enter the kingdom if you reject the King?" (see Luke 19:38–40) The Pharisees were preoccupied with the great events of the future but were ignoring the opportunities of the present (Luke 12:54–57). (Borrow [Be courageous](#) Luke 14-24)

**In your midst** (1787) (**entos**) is a preposition which means inside, which is exactly what Jesus means in the only other NT use of this word declaring to the Pharisees to "first clean the **inside** of the cup and of the dish so that the outside of it may become clean also." (Mt 23:26). **BDAG** says **entos** "(1) pertains to a specific area inside someth., inside, within, within the limits of" and (2) pertaining to what is inside an area, content."

**Gilbrant** - **Entos** is properly an adverb of place and was used that way in classical and Attic Greek, the Septuagint, the inscriptions, and other Greek documents of the First and Second Centuries A.D. It became an improper preposition which took as its object a noun in the genitive case. In the Septuagint (e.g., Isaiah 16:11; Psalm 103:1) **entos** refers to the inside of man (i.e., the heart). It is used only as an improper preposition in the New Testament. However, it still functions adverbially. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

Earlier in Luke Jesus had taught about the **Kingdom of God**...

Luke 13:18-21-note So He was saying, "What is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it? 19 "It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and THE BIRDS OF THE AIR NESTED IN ITS BRANCHES." 20 And again He said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? 21 "It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened."

The **kingdom of God** begins in the heart of all who believe and it grows and grows like the mustard seed and like leaven until it is fully realized in its millennial glory, which is the final phase of the expanding Kingdom of God on earth. In other words, the Kingdom of God begins as a spiritual Kingdom in the heart but is consummated in a visible Kingdom on earth in the Millennium.

Just to reiterate -- So how does the Kingdom of God grow? Every time a person accepts Christ as Savior and Lord the Kingdom of God grows or expands so to speak, just as Luke described in Acts 2:47 writing that "the Lord was **adding to their number** day by day [Kingdom of God expanding] those who were being saved." And not only does this aspect of the Kingdom of God grow like a mustard seed or like leaven, but one day when Christ the King is revealed so too will be His loyal subjects. Paul explains this aspect of the Kingdom of God in Romans 8 writing...

For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly ([apekdechomai](#)) for the revealing ([apokalupsis](#) = MEANS TAKING THE LID OFF TO REVEAL WHAT WAS PREVIOUSLY HIDDEN - SAINTS TODAY ARE IN A STAGE OF "INCUBATION" WHICH ONE DAY WILL HATCH OUT IN GLORY!) of the sons of God (BELIEVERS - SURE HOPEFULLY SOME OF YOUR UNREGENERATE FRIENDS KNOW YOU ARE BELIEVERS [cf Mt 5:16, Php 2:15] BUT THEY HAVE NO CLUE OF WHAT YOU WILL BE ON THAT DAY WHEN YOU ARE GLORIFIED!). 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope (ABSOLUTE ASSURANCE OF FUTURE GOOD) 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of **the glory of the children of God**. (THIS DESCRIBES SAINTS IN THEIR ETERNAL GLORIFIED STATE!) (Ro 8:19-[note](#); Ro 8:20-21-[note](#))

John also alludes to the fact that the world looks at us today and has no clue as to our real identity in Christ and thus who we are destined to become when we are glorified...

See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him (THEY DID NOT KNOW THE KING AND THUS THEY ARE UNABLE TO RECOGNIZE HIS SUBJECTS IN THEIR FULL GLORY FOR IT HAS NOT YET BEEN REVEALED). 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. (1 Jn 3:1-[note](#), 1Jn 3:2-[note](#))

So when the King returns in His glory, the world will see Him and will also see His loyal subjects arrayed in His glory. Oh, happy day!

**In your midst** - The kingdom of God was in their midst because the rule of God was being acknowledged by many (that is of course what caused the Pharisees considerable jealousy and angst). AMILLENIALISTS use this verse to say that Jesus Himself did not believe in a literal 1000 year reign on earth AND thus prophecies regarding Israel are not to be interpreted LITERALLY (this was Augustine's approach to the Scripture).

**MacArthur** writes that "The kingdom of which Jesus spoke is, as Paul wrote, marked by "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Ro 14:17<sup>+</sup>). It exists in the hearts of all those in whom the King lives. The wonder of wonders is that **the Trinity takes up residence in the hearts of those who embrace Christ and enter the spiritual kingdom**. In John 14:17 Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would indwell believers, while in John 14:23 He added, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him." (Ibid)

**Cole** sees a slightly different meaning to Jesus' explanation of the kingdom in their midst - "The kingdom of God is here in your very midst in the person of the King, and yet you have not recognized it because you wrongly expect it to be ushered in with great flourish." It is interesting however that Cole then goes on to describe the growth of the kingdom of God alluding to Luke 13:18-19-see notes and writes "Thus the initial coming of God's kingdom begins relatively unnoticed, like the mustard seed planted in the ground. As people yield their lives to the lordship of Jesus Christ, He begins to reign in their hearts. In that sense His kingdom is presently being established in and through His church, as the gospel is proclaimed and believed. But, this is not the final form of His kingdom. He will return personally in power and glory to judge His enemies and to rule over the whole earth, as He goes on to teach (Luke 17:22-37)." ([The Present and Future Kingdom](#))

**The kingdom of God** - Matthew uses the synonymous phrase the Kingdom of Heaven where "heaven" is used as a "euphemism" for the Name God which orthodox Jews would not pronounce. Thus Matthew being sensitive to the Jewish scruples, substitutes the name of the divine place for the name of the divine Person (God). Other than the Gospel of Matthew, the NT writers referred to the **Kingdom of God**. In simple terms this phrase defines that sphere over which God exercises supreme, sovereign authority. As discussed in Jesus' day the Kingdom of God was invisible and internal, being manifest in the hearts of believers, those who are subject His rule. Note that both Jesus (Mt 4:17+, Mt 10:7+, Lk 4:43+, Lk 8:1+, Lk 16:16+) and the apostles (Phillip in Acts 8:12+, Paul in Acts 20:25+, Acts 28:31+) focused on the **preaching of the Kingdom of God**.

See **Tony Garland's** interesting analysis of [The Arrival of the Kingdom of God](#)

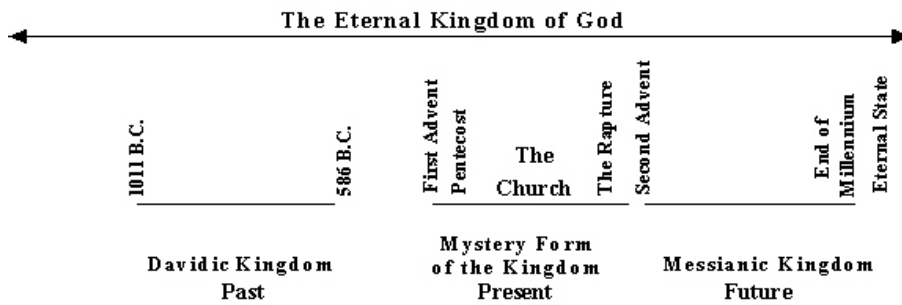
See **George Peters'** article on Lk 17:21 entitled "[The passage most relied on to prove the Church-Kingdom theory utterly disproves it.](#)"

**Background on Peters** - Without a doubt the most extensive work ever written on the **Kingdom of God** is [George N. H. Peters](#) (a Lutheran pastor) three volume work published in 1884 and entitled "[The Theocratic Kingdom](#)." What is fascinating about his life work, which is some 2189 pages in length, is that (1) he was not a dispensationalist, (2) he approached the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures from a literal perspective and (3) he believed that the Scriptures clearly taught that God was not finished with Israel and that there would be an earthly Kingdom of God over which Jesus Christ would reign as King.

Luke repeatedly alludes to the **Kingdom** in both his Gospel and the book of Acts. His use in the Gospel is interesting as many commentators say that Luke's Gospel is primarily directly to Gentiles. And yet Luke places great emphasis on the **Kingdom of God** which is indeed what the Jews of Jesus' day were looking and hoping for.

For those who literally interpret Rev 20:1-10<sup>+</sup> here is a proposed schematic...

## KINGDOMS OF GOD



KINGDOM OF GOD PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE  
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Here are all of Luke's uses of **Kingdom** (including the phrase "**Kingdom of God**").

Luke 1:33-note and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His **kingdom** will have no end."

**Ryrie** - As the Davidic Messiah, Jesus will reign over the house of Jacob, which will happen in the millennial kingdom. This promise is not now **being** fulfilled simply because the church is not the house of Jacob, and Christ is presently at the right hand of the Father, which is never equated with the throne of David.

Luke 4:43-note But He said to them, "I must preach the **kingdom of God** to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose."

**Comment:** Notice that "**the kingdom of God**" is the main theme of Jesus' preaching. This is its first mention in Luke where it occurs 32 times (cf. Mark 1:14, 15+). The Jews understood this as the time when God would openly assume His royal power.

Luke 6:20-note And turning His gaze toward His disciples, He began to say, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the **kingdom of God**."

**Comment:** The poor in spirit are those who belong to the kingdom of God and thus they are by default believers in Messiah, those who are born again (cf John 3:3+).

Luke 7:28-note "I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the **kingdom of God** is greater than he."

**MacArthur** - John was greater than the OT prophets because he actually saw with his eyes and personally participated in the fulfillment of what they only prophesied (Mt 11:10, 13+; cf. 1Pe 1:10, 11+). But all believers after the cross are greater still, because they participate in the full understanding and experience of something John merely foresaw in shadowy form—the actual atoning work of Christ.

Luke 8:1-note Soon afterwards, He began going around from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the **kingdom of God**. The twelve were with Him,

Luke 8:10-note And He said, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the **kingdom of God**, but to the rest it is in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND."

**Comment:** Only those born again could "see" (and understand, cf John 3:3+) the mysteries (hidden from view of unregenerate men but revealed by God to His children in the faith) of this phase of the Kingdom of God in contrast to the day when the King returns and all men when then see the Kingdom of God, but only those born again will gain entry into the Millennial Kingdom.

Luke 9:2-note And He sent them out to proclaim the **kingdom of God** and to perform healing.

**Comment:** So not only Jesus but His disciples were proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom of God which could only be entered by grace through faith.

Luke 9:11-note But the crowds were aware of this and followed Him; and welcoming them, He began speaking to them about the **kingdom of God** and curing those who had need of healing.

Luke 9:27-note But I say to you truthfully, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death until

they see the **kingdom of God.**" (Matthew adds "until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." Mt 16:28)

**Comment:** Jesus is referring to Peter, John, and James, who would witness the transfiguration (but not everyone agrees with this interpretation but the context favors the transfiguration which follows immediately Lk 9:28-36), which would be a "preview of coming attractions," so to speak. And so in this special, unique moment, the otherwise invisible kingdom was made visible in part to these three chosen men so that they might have a foretaste of the glories to be revealed when Jesus returned as King of kings to set up His earthly kingdom to be ruled from Jerusalem (cf Mt 24:30-[note](#)).

Luke 9:60-note But He said to him, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the **kingdom of God.**"

Luke 9:62-note But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the **kingdom of God.**"

**Comment:** I'm a farm boy and if you drive the tractor continually looking backwards, your furrows will be crooked. Jesus is calling him to lay aside double mindedness for no one can follow Christ with a divided heart, and thus they will miss the Kingdom of God.

Luke 10:9-10-note and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The **kingdom of God** has come near to you.' 'Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the **kingdom of God** has come near.'

**Comment:** As the disciples went out they were to emphasize the Kingdom of God because as we have noted that is what the Jews were looking for. The kingdom came near because the King was present and His message explained how to enter His Kingdom. To miss the message is to miss the Kingdom of God (then and still true today).

Luke 11:2-note And He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your **kingdom come.**' (An imperative - "let it happen" is the idea).

**Comment:** This is a prayer most of us have prayed but probably never really understood what we were praying. To ask God for His Kingdom to come has two applications. The first is that the invisible Kingdom would come into hearts of lost around us, and in believing in Jesus, they would enter His Kingdom. This growth of the Kingdom of God by addition of new believers is depicted by the tiny mustard seed growing into a huge tree and the speck of leaven spreading throughout the flour. John MacArthur goes into greater depth and sees actually 3 ways the invisible Kingdom grows - [see his sermon on this verse](#).

Luke 11:17-18-note But He knew their thoughts and said to them, "Any **kingdom** divided against itself is laid waste; and a house divided against itself falls." If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his **kingdom** stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul.... Luke 11:20-note "But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the **kingdom of God** has come upon you.

**Comment:** The kingdom of God was upon them because the King was present in their midst. If they had received Jesus as Redeemer and Lord, they would have entered into the invisible Kingdom of God, but in their state of self-righteousness and hardened hearts, not only did they not receive Christ, but they committed an abominable blasphemy against Him!

Luke 12:31-note "But **seek** His **kingdom**, and these things will be added to you. "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the **kingdom**.

**Comment:** Jesus is calling for us to focus not on earthly, material things but on His kingdom, worshiping, serving and proclaiming that kingdom, the sphere where Jesus rules as King and Lord.

Luke 13:18-note So He was saying, "What is the **kingdom of God** like, and to what shall I compare it?... Luke 13:20-note And again He said, "To what shall I compare the **kingdom of God**?

**Comment:** We have already explained that just as these start small and grow big, so too would the Kingdom of God, starting in individual hearts in an invisible form today, but in the future being world wide and visible. This reminds me of Habakkuk's prophecy that "the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (Hab 2:14-note).

Luke 13:28-29-note "In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the **kingdom of God**, but yourselves being thrown out. 29 "And they



will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the **kingdom of God**.

**Comment:** For those who reject Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God, there is but one alternative and that is eternal punishment. MacArthur explains "The torment of hell will not be limited to the pain of punishment, but will include the remorse, shock, and surprise of those who ended up there despite thinking they were going to heaven. The more people in hell knew about the gospel, the more profound their remorse will be; their pain will be proportional to their level of rejection. And since their rejection will be eternal and incurable, so will their sin be and the judgment of that sin." Why would the Jewish people be shocked when one minute after death they were in hell? It was because they took it for granted that they would be saved simply because they were physical children of Abraham. But unless they believed as did Abraham (Ge 15:6-note), they would not enter the Kingdom of heaven with their Jewish patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!

Luke 14:15-note When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the **kingdom of God**!"

**MacArthur** - This was a beatitude; a toast directed at himself and his fellow Pharisees, affirming that they will be among the blessed at the heavenly banquet **in the kingdom of God** (ED: AS I LIKE TO SAY WHEN A PERSON IS DECEIVED, BY DEFINITION THEY DO NOT KNOW THEY ARE DECEIVED - THIS MAN IS NOT DECEIVED TODAY FOR HE IS IN HADES AWAITING THE FINAL GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT!) It was not only a pronouncement of blessing on themselves, but also a scornful rebuke of the Lord's declaration that they were too proud to enter God's kingdom (cf. Lk 14:11). His words bounced off their confidence that their Abrahamic ancestry (cf. John 8:33-59) and adherence to the traditions, regulations, and rituals would secure a place for them at God's banquet. Not only did they fully expect to be at that heavenly feast, but also to be in the seats of honor. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Luke 11-17)

Luke 16:16-note "The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John (REFERRING TO THE OT); since that time (JESUS TOOK CENTER STAGE) the gospel of the **kingdom of God** has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it (SEE Luke 9:23-note; cf. Lk 14:26-27-note)

Luke 17:20-21-note Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The **kingdom of God** is not coming with signs to be observed; 21 nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the **kingdom of God** is in your midst."

Luke 18:16-17-note But Jesus called for them, saying, "Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the **kingdom of God** belongs to such as these. 17 "Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the **kingdom of God** like a child will not enter it at all."

**Comment:** Referring to the role of faith in Jesus as the requirement to enter the Kingdom of God, invisible today, but one day in the future visible.

Luke 18:24-25-note And Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the **kingdom of God**! 25 "For 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**."

**Comment:** Wealth is like a god that obscures one's need for the true God!

Luke 18:29-note And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the **kingdom of God**, who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life."

**Comment:** Matthew's Gospel (Mt 19:28) adds the phrase "in the regeneration" (Mt 19:28), which in simple terms refers to Jesus' earthly, millennial kingdom. MacArthur adds that "That kingdom will be the rebirth of the world; paradise regained. Those who have been granted a spiritual rebirth at salvation will participate in the rebirth of the earth; the "times of refreshing" (Acts 3:19) and the "period of restoration of all things" (v. 21). It is the kingdom about which Jesus taught the disciples for forty days between His resurrection and ascension (Acts 1:3). In that kingdom, the apostles will "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Luke 19:11-note While they were listening to these things, Jesus went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the **kingdom of God** was going to appear immediately.

**Comment:** The crowd following Jesus thought that Jesus was getting ready to set up His earthly kingdom,

the kingdom that the Jews had been anticipating and for which they were fervently longing. The verb "appear" is a nautical term like a ship appearing on the horizon. Again, the majority of Jews had failed to receive His message that they must first enter the invisible Kingdom of God by grace through faith and then they would be able to enter the King's earthly kingdom. As John wrote "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him (AS SAVIOR AND KING)." (Jn 1:11).

Luke 21:10-note Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation and **kingdom** against **kingdom**,

Luke 21:31-note "So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the **kingdom of God** is near.

Luke 22:16-note for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the **kingdom of God**."...Lk 22:18-note for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the **kingdom of God** comes."

**Comment:** O glorious day! Notice that with the phrase "until the **kingdom of God** comes" is a clear reference to the future visible reign of King Jesus. At that time He will eat and drink again in His millennial kingdom. What a tragedy to miss this glorious celebration by rejecting His offer of salvation!

Luke 22:29-30-note and just as My Father has granted Me a **kingdom**, I grant you that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

**Comment:** The kingdom the Father had granted Jesus is a reference to His Messianic Kingdom (Millennium).

Luke 23:42-note And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your **kingdom**!" 43 And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

**Comment:** The thief on the cross understood what the religious Jews in their pride and hard hearts simply could not see! His reference to your kingdom was a plea for forgiveness of his sins. He had seen Christ forgive those who crucified Him and so he sought personal forgiveness.

Luke 23:51 -note he (Joseph - Lk 23:50) had not consented to their plan and action), a man from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was waiting for the **kingdom of God**;

**Comment:** What was Joseph waiting for? Ultimately the same thing as the other Jews but his eyes had been opened to understand that it had to first be entered by faith and later would come in full bloom in the Millennium. MacArthur adds that Joseph "joins the list of righteous people whom Luke mentions, including Zacharias and Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist (Lk 1:5-note), Simeon (Lk 2:25-note = "looking for the consolation of Israel"), and Anna (Lk 2:36-38-note "all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem"). According to John 19:38 Joseph was a disciple of Jesus Christ, albeit a secret one, who was afraid to make his faith in Christ known. But while many secret disciples were false disciples, and not true believers (John 12:42-43), he was a true disciple, as his actions demonstrate." (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Luke 18-24)

Acts 1:3 To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the **kingdom of God**.

**Comment:** Jesus was "filling in the blanks" regarding the disciple's understanding of the Kingdom of God, especially the truth related to His rule over believer's hearts, which was the sphere (the "kingdom") over which He was to be King. He must have also spoke about aspects of the future Millennial kingdom as suggested by their question in Acts 1:6 where they wanted to know the specific time when this glorious Kingdom would be a reality?

Acts 1:6 So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the **kingdom** to Israel?"

**Comment:** The disciples still held on to the hope that now that Jesus had been crucified, He would establish His earthly kingdom. When Jesus was asked by the Pharisees about the Kingdom of God, He answered "behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst. The Pharisees and most of the Jews (including His disciples) were expecting that when the Messiah came, He would bring in a political Kingdom. But Jesus countered their belief by explaining that His first coming would make available an "internal," invisible Kingdom in the hearts of all who believed in Him. It would not be until His Second Coming that He would establish His external, visible Kingdom, a Kingdom for which His disciples had

been praying for centuries (Mt 6:10-[note](#) - and unfortunately many have not fully understood for what they were praying!). As described above in Acts 1:3, even after His resurrection and shortly before He ascended Jesus had been "filling in the blanks" regarding His coming Kingdom. And in that context their question in Acts 1:6 is very significant regarding a proper understanding of the Kingdom of God. Even the ESV Study Bible comments that "The disciples...concluded from his resurrection and the promise of the Spirit that the messianic era had dawned and the final salvation of Israel was imminent." Two points are significant - (1) Jesus did not refute their understanding of the restoration of the Kingdom, but their understanding of the timing of that restoration (see Acts 1:7-8) (2) Notice the verb **restore** which in Greek verb [apokathistemi](#) which means to restore to an earlier condition, to reinstate, to return to a position. They had just asked about the nation of Israel as to when it would be restored to its former position as chief of the nations in the Kingdom of God. Those who hold to the false teaching that the promises to Israel have been replaced by the Church have considerable difficulty with passages like Acts 1:6. Why? Because if Israel has been replaced by the Church, this passage would make absolutely no sense and one would think Jesus would have corrected them. In other words, the Church had not even come into existence! How could it be **restored** to its earlier condition? Clearly it could not be because it did not have an "earlier condition." The disciples' question is referring to the Kingdom being restored to the nation of Israel. This is another peg in the coffin of replacement theology. (See [What is replacement theology / supersessionism?](#))

**MacArthur** agrees writing that Jesus' answer in Acts 1:7 (He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;) "shows that the apostles' expectation of a literal, earthly kingdom mirrored what Christ taught and what the OT predicted. Otherwise, He would have corrected them about such a crucial aspect of His teaching."

**Constable** agrees "that Jesus did not correct the disciples for believing that the messianic kingdom would come. He only corrected their assumption that they could know when the kingdom would begin and that the kingdom would begin in a few days."

**Dwight Pentecost** - "This passage makes it clear that while the covenanted form of the theocracy has not been cancelled and has only been postponed, this **present age** is definitely not a period in which a new form of theocratic administration is inaugurated. In this way Jesus not only answered the disciples' question concerning the timing of the future Davidic kingdom, but He also made a clear distinction between it and the intervening present form of the theocratic administration."

**John A. McLean** writes - Amillennialists do not believe that God will **restore** an earthly kingdom to Israel as Israel but that He will restore a spiritual kingdom to the church, which they believe has replaced physical Israel as "spiritual Israel" or "the new Israel." Premillennialists believe that since the promises about Messiah's earthly reign have not yet been fulfilled, and since every reference to Israel in the New Testament can refer to physical Israel, we should anticipate an earthly reign of Messiah on the earth following His second coming. ([Did Jesus Correct the Disciples' View of the Kingdom?](#) *Bibliotheca Sacra* 151:602 (April-June 1994):215-27)

**MacArthur** adds this comment by first asking: What kingdom? The visible (external) Kingdom of God. The apostles shared the fervent hope of their nation that Messiah would come and take up His earthly kingdom. Often Jesus had taught them prophetically about the future (Mt 13:40-50; 24, 25; Luke 12:36-40; 17:20-37; 21:5-36). The enthusiastic question they were asking Him, "**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?**" is thus perfectly understandable. After all, here was the resurrected Messiah speaking with them about His Kingdom. They knew of no reason the earthly form of the Kingdom could not be set up immediately, since the Messianic work signaling the end of the age had arrived (**ED COMMENT:** OR SO THEY THOUGHT, BUT THEY WERE MISTAKEN BECAUSE THEY DID NOT UNDERSTAND THAT FIRST MUST COME THE [Time of Jacob's Distress](#) described in Jeremiah 30:7-[note](#)). It must be remembered that the interval between the two comings of Messiah was not explicitly taught in the Old Testament. The disciples on the road to Emmaus were greatly disappointed that Jesus had not redeemed Israel and set up the kingdom (Luke 24:21-note). Further, the apostles knew that Ezekiel 36 and Joel 2 connected the coming of the kingdom with the outpouring of the Spirit Jesus had just promised. It is understandable that they hoped the arrival of the kingdom was imminent. Surely it was for this kingdom they had hoped since they first joined Jesus. They had experienced a roller coaster ride of hope and doubt which they now felt might be over. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts 1-12)

Acts 3:19-21 (Luke makes a definite allusion to the Kingdom quoting Peter as he addresses the Jews after he was filled with the Spirit on Pentecost) "Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that **times of refreshing** (THIS REFERS TO THE COMING KINGDOM - NOTE HOW IT IS LINKED WITH THE SECOND COMING IN NEXT VERSE) may come from the presence of the Lord; 20 and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, 21 Whom heaven must receive (HIS ASCENSION AND HIS SEATING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER DURING THE CHURCH AGE, THE "DIVINE PARENTHESIS") until the **period of restoration** (SEE BELOW) of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.

**Comment:** This phrase the **PERIOD OF RESTORATION** speaks of the coming Kingdom of Messiah. And to substantiate this premise notice that **restoration** is the Greek word **apokatastasis** (used only here in Scripture and meaning a restitution of a thing to its former condition) which is derived from the root verb [apokathistemi](#). [Apokathistemi](#) is the same verb used by the disciples in their question to Jesus in Acts 1:6 which we have discussed above. This association is clearly no accident for both passages refer to the same period of time, the coming Kingdom of God, the time when Messiah rules and reigns from His Holy City (see Zech 14:16, 20-21-commentary)

**Tannehill** comments that "There is a close connection between the hope expressed in 1:6 and the conditional promise of Peter in 3:19–21, indicated not only by the unusual words 'restore' and 'restoration...but also by the references to "times" ([kairos](#) in Acts 1:7) and "seasons" ("times" = [kairos](#) in Acts 3:19) in both contexts. The 'times of restoration of all that God spoke' through the prophets include the **restoration** of the reign to Israel through its messianic King." (Borrow [Robert C. Tannehill, The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts](#))

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about **the kingdom of God** and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.

**Comment:** This refers not to the visible kingdom, but to the invisible kingdom, for one must first enter that kingdom by grace through faith before they could enter the visible Messianic Kingdom.

Acts 14:22 (After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch- Acts 14:21) strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the **kingdom of God**."

**Comment:** In view of **many tribulations** perseverance would be necessary. And those who persevere to the end will be saved (Mt 24:13, Heb 3:6, 14) and enter the Kingdom. Don't misunderstand -- their perseverance would not save them, but it would be an indication that they were genuinely saved (and thus enabled to persevere by the indwelling Spirit).

Acts 19:8 And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the **kingdom of God**.

**Comment:** Of course Paul was explaining to them about the invisible Kingdom which could only be entered by faith in the Messiah. The following three uses of kingdom in Acts (below) have the same sense. Paul was explaining the way of salvation.

Acts 20:25 "And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching **the kingdom**, will no longer see my face.

Acts 28:23 When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the **kingdom of God** and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.

Acts 28:31 preaching the **kingdom of God** and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.

**Comment:** What was Paul testifying about in Acts 28:23? What is he preaching in this verse and Acts 20:25? The Gospel by which if received and believed one enters into the Kingdom of God now and in the future when it is consummated at the return of the King of that kingdom.

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## SCOFIELD: Kingdom Old Testament Summary

### I. Dominion over the Earth before the Call of Abraham.

(1) Dominion over creation was given to the first man and woman (Ge 1:26-28). Through the fall this dominion was lost, Satan becoming "prince of this world" (Mt 4:8-10; Jn 14:30). Cp Heb 2:5-9

(2) After the flood, the principle of human government was established under the covenant with Noah (Gen 9:6; see Gen 9:16, note). Biblically, this is still the charter of all government.

## **II. The Theocratic Kingdom in Israel.**

(See also 1Sa 8:7, note.) The call of Abraham involved, with much else, the creation of a distinctive people through whom great purposes of God toward the human race might be worked out (see Israel, Ge12:1-3; Ro 11:26, note). Among these purposes is the establishment of a worldwide kingdom.

The history of the divine mediatorial rule in Israel:

- (1) Its establishment under Moses (Ex19:3-7; cp. Ex 3:1-10; 24:12).
- (2) Its administration under leader-judges (Jos 1:1-5; Jdg 2:16-18).
- (3) Its administration under kings (1Sa10:1,24; 16:1-13; 1Ki 9:1-5).
- (4) Its end at the captivity (Ezek 21:25-27; cp Je 27:6-8; Da 2:36-38)

## **III. The Future Restoration of the Theocratic Kingdom.**

(1) The Davidic Covenant (2Sa 7:8-16, 16, cp Ro 1:3 "descendant of David" = Messiah]; Ps 89:3-4,20, 21,28-37).

(2) The exposition of the Davidic Covenant by the prophets (Isa 1:25, 26 to Zech 12:6-8). They describe the kingdom as follows:

(a) It will be Davidic, to be established under David's heir who is to be born of a virgin, therefore truly man, but also "Immanuel," "Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isa 7:13 - 14; 9:6 - 7; 11:1; Jer 23:5; Ezek 34:23 (Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.<sup>24</sup> "And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.) Ezek37:24; Hos3:4-5).

(b) It will be a kingdom heavenly in origin, principle, and authority (Da 2:34, 35,44, 45), but set up on the earth, with Jerusalem as the capital (Isa 2:2-4; 4:3,5; 24:23; 33:20; 62:1-7; Jer 23:5; 31:38-40; Joel 3:1,16-17).

(c) The kingdom is to be established first over regathered, restored, and converted Israel, and is then to become universal (Ps 2:6-8; 22:1-31; 24:1-10; Isa 1:2-3; 11:1,10-13; 60:12; Jer 23:5-8; 30:7-11; Ezek 20:33-40; 37:21-25; Zech 9:10; 14:16-19).

(d) The moral characteristics of the kingdom are to be righteousness and peace. The meek, not the proud, will inherit the earth; longevity will be greatly increased; the knowledge of the LORD will be universal; beast-ferocity will be removed; absolute equity will be enforced; and open sin will be visited with instant judgment; whereas the enormous majority of earth's inhabitants will be saved (Ps 2:9; Isa 11:4,6 - 9; 26:9; 65:20; Zech 14:16 - 21). The N.T. (Rev 20:1 - 5) adds a detail of immense significance -the removal of Satan from the scene. It is impossible to conceive to what heights of spiritual, intellectual, and physical perfection humanity will attain in this, its coming age of righteousness and peace (Ps 72:1 -10; Isa 11:4 - 9).

(e) The kingdom is to be established by power, not persuasion, and is to follow divine judgment upon the Gentile world powers (Ps 2:4-9; Isa 9:7; Da 2:35,44-45; 7:26-27; Zech 14:1 - 19). See Zech 6:11, note.

(f) The restoration of Israel and the establishment of the kingdom are connected with the advent of the LORD, yet future (Deu 30:3 - 5; Ps 2:1 - 9; Zech 14:4).

(g) The chastisement reserved for disobedience in the house of David (2 Sam 7:14; Ps 89:30 - 33) fell in the captivities and worldwide dispersion. Since that time, though a remnant returned under prince Zerubbabel, Jerusalem has generally been under the political authority of Gentiles. The Davidic Covenant has not been abrogated (Ps 89:33 - 37), however, but is yet to be fulfilled (Acts 15:14 - 17).

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## **Kingdom (New Testament.), Summary:**

Kingdom truth is developed in the N.T. in the following order:



(1) The promise of the kingdom to David and his descendants, and described in the prophets (2 Sam 7:8 - 17, and notes; Zech 12:8), enters the N.T. absolutely unchanged (Luke 1:31 - 33). The King was born in Bethlehem (Mat 2:1; cp. Mic 5:2) of a virgin (Mat 1:18 - 25; cp. Isa 7:14).

(2) The kingdom announced as "near" (Mat 4:17, note) by John the Baptist, by the King, and by the Twelve, was rejected by the Jews, first morally (Mat 11:20, note), and afterward officially (Mat 21:42 - 43), and the King, crowned with thorns, was crucified.

(3) In anticipation of His official rejection and crucifixion, the King revealed the "secrets" of the kingdom of heaven (Mat 13:11, note) to be fulfilled in the interval between His rejection and His return in glory (Mat 13:1 - 50).

(4) Afterward He announced His purpose to "build" His Church (Mat 16:18, notes; cp. Eph 3:9 -11), another "mystery" which is being fulfilled in this present age contemporaneously with "the secrets of the kingdom of heaven." The "secrets of the kingdom of heaven" and the "mystery" of the Church (Eph 3:9 - 11) occupy for the most part the same period, i.e. this present age.

(5) The secrets of the kingdom will be brought to an end by the "harvest" (Mat 13:39 - 43, 49 - 50) at the return of the King in glory, the Church having previously been caught up to meet Him in the air (1 Th 4:13 - 17).

(6) Upon His return the King will restore the Davidic monarchy in His own Person, regather dispersed Israel, establish His power over all the earth, and reign 1000 years (Mat 24:27 - 30; Acts 15:14 - 17; Rev 20:1 - 10). And

(7) the kingdom of heaven (Mat 3:2, note), thus established under David's divine Son, has for its object the restoration of the divine authority in the earth, which may be regarded as a revolted province of the great kingdom of God (Mat 6:33, note). The Kingdom Age of 1000 years constitutes the seventh dispensation (Rev 20:4, note). When Christ defeats the last enemy, death (vv. 24 - 26), then He will deliver up the kingdom to "God the Father," that "God [i.e. the triune God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] may be all in all" (v. 28). The eternal throne is that "of God and of the Lamb" (Rev 22:1).

**Luke 17:22 And He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.**

**KJV Luke 17:22** And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

## **SECOND COMING: LOOKING AND LONGING FOR IT**

- **when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man** Luke 5:35; 13:35; Matthew 9:15; John 7:33-36; 8:21-24; 12:35; 13:33; 16:5-7; John 16:16-22; 17:11-13
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:22 7 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

Beginning in Luke 17:22-37 Jesus gives us some details that are associated with His Second Coming. However, He is not a chronological description. It is more of a general description, not a sequence. A more chronological treatment is found in Luke 21 and many other places such as the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24:15ff-[note](#)).

**And He said to the disciples** - Jesus seems to move now from addressing the Pharisees, to addressing His disciples, enumerating several characteristics of His return which precedes the establishment of His Kingdom.

**MacArthur** adds that "the Jews were looking at the Second Coming as if it was going to be a...glorious, fulfilling celebration of Christ's return and establishment of His Kingdom...and they would be at the center of it as the sons of Abraham. However Jesus is telling His disciples that something very different...that when He comes it will be deadly, frightening, terrifying, destructive judgment. This was shocking to the Jews who had rejected Jesus, the Pharisees in particular, but I think it was also startling even to the disciples who anticipated a glorious kingdom and not a kingdom that was inaugurated with destructive judgment. ([Sermon](#))

**The days will come** - As discussed in this context this phrase refers to the days of the Second Coming, which naturally beg the question "When will these days come to pass?" Well, we don't have to speculate or set dates (as people still foolishly continue to do) because Jesus tells us clearly in Mark 13:32-33

But of that day or hour (SECOND COMING OF CHRIST) no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. **"Take heed** (BE WATCHING!), **keep on the alert** (STAY AWAKE); for ([term of explanation](#) - EXPLAINS WHY WE NEED TO KEEP WATCHING AND STAYING AWAKE) you do not know when the appointed time will come.

**Comment:** **Take heed** and **be on the alert** are both commands in the [present imperative](#), calling for this to be our lifestyle, our daily practice. And so this calls for saints to be looking continually. Jesus knows that if we are continually LOOKING for His Return, we are much more likely (enabled by His Spirit) to be LIVING for His glory (cf 1 Jn 3:3-[note](#), 2 Pe 3:11-[note](#)). While we not know when, we do know that no prophecy needs to be fulfilled before the Rapture of the Church, the next event on God's prophetic timetable. And so the Rapture is [Imminent](#), and could happen at any time. It could happen at any time so that every generation of Christians can live in the light of that anticipation. And when the Church is raptured, this event will almost certainly initiate the events of the Tribulation or [Daniel's Seventieth Week](#).

**The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man**- In context of the Kingdom of God, Jesus now moves from the "already now," invisible, internal Kingdom of God to the "not yet," external, eternal Kingdom of God which begins with His return and the establishment of the Messianic (Millennial) reign for 1000 years. These are **the days of the Son of Man** the disciples **will long to see**. He is implying that this future Kingdom would not come about in the disciples' lifetime. Recall that in Acts 1:6 they were looking for this Kingdom, Luke recording their question to Jesus "'Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" Every true follower of Jesus Christ in every age has looked for and longed for these days of the coming of the Son of Man to set up His kingdom on earth and rule the world from His city, Jerusalem.

1 Th 1:10-[note](#) and to wait ([anemeno](#) in the [present tense](#) - as one's lifestyle) for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

Titus 2:11-14-[note](#) For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking ([prosdechomai](#) in the [present tense](#) - as one's lifestyle, with anticipation) for the blessed hope (NOTICE THAT IN CONTEXT LOOKING FOR JESUS MOTIVATES LIVING FOR HIM - Titus 2:12) and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus (JESUS' GLORIOUS [SECOND COMING](#)), 14 Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession (WE ARE NO LONGER OUR OWN!), zealous for good deeds.

2 Ti 4:8-[note](#) in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved ([perfect tense](#) - love Him when we were saved, with this love being ongoing) His appearing (HIS [SECOND COMING](#)).

In fact the cry in Revelation 22:20-[note](#) is a reflection of this longing of all the saints of throughout all the ages...

He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."

In 1 Corinthians 16:22 expressed this longing with the great word [Maranatha \(in depth study\)](#), a cry from our heart "O Lord Come!" (Play the great old chorus "[Maranatha](#)" - it is guaranteed to stir your heart to long to see His face!)

**ILLUSTRATION**- Dr. Joseph Stowell, the President of Moody Bible Institute, once visited a home for retarded children that was operated by a Christian friend. Noticing the children's handprints on the windows, Dr. Stowell remarked about them to his friend. "Oh, those," he replied. "The children here love Jesus and they're so eager for Him to return that they lean against the windows as they look up at the sky." That's not a retarded way to live! May we all imitate those simple children by making sure that we are in Christ's present kingdom and by faithfully awaiting His soon coming future kingdom!

Are we looking for His return,  
and do we really want to see Him come?

I often greet brethren at church with the words "It could be today," and most who hear that for the first time are quizzical. What are you talking about is the look and/or question I get. And then I explain that Jesus could come back today, with the implication being are you ready to meet Him in the air? I will never forget one reaction from a Christian doctor with whom I occasionally interacted. His response was "Well, I certainly hope not! I've got too many things I want to accomplish." I am glad I was sitting down at my desk or I might have fallen down! I'm sure he saw the strange look on my face!

It is worth noting that about 1 in every 20-25 New Testament verses directly or indirectly alludes to the Second Coming, to the time when the invisible Kingdom of God becomes visible because the King has arrived. So the Second Coming stirs a longing in our heart, as a Bride longs to see her groom, and motivates a desire to be found pure by Him as John describes in his first epistle...

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope (HOPE IS NOT HOPE SO BUT HOPE SURE! WHAT HOPE? HIS [SECOND COMING](#) WHEN WE WILL BE GLORIFIED LIKE HIM) fixed on Him **purifies himself**, just as He is pure. (1 John 3:2-3<sup>[note](#)</sup>)

Given the NT emphasis on the Second Coming, we all need to ask ourselves as disciples, "Do I find myself frequently longing for His return and His future Kingdom on earth?" If not, then it may be that you have fallen into the trap described by John MacArthur...

On the other hand, those who care little about Christ's honor and God's glory, who view Jesus as the means to their own personal fulfillment, have little interest in the second coming. Contemporary evangelism encourages that self-centered perspective. It makes the salvation of sinners the goal and relegates God to being merely the means to accomplishing that goal. But that is the opposite of what Scripture teaches. The glory of God is the goal of redemption, and the salvation of sinners is a means of accomplishing that goal. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Luke 11-17)

**Will long** (1937) ([epithumeo](#) from **epí** = upon, used intensively + **thumós** = passion) (See noun [epithumia](#)) means literally passion upon and so to fix one's passion upon which could be good [Mt 13:17, Lk 22:15 used of Jesus] or bad [1Co 10:6]). Epithumeo describes a strong desire to do or secure something, in this case the **Days of the Son of Man**.

**Broadman Bible Commentary** - The intense desire of a pilgrim, martyr church will be to reach the destination toward which it moves. Like the Pharisees, the disciples will also be concerned about the end of the age....The whole passage is dealing rather with the problems of a Parousia that does not occur when expected and longed for.

**And you will not see it** - His disciples would **not see it** signifies that He would not return during their life. However the disciples will **see it** in the future when they (and you and I will) return with Jesus "following Him on white horses" (Rev 19:14<sup>[note](#)</sup>, Rev 17:14<sup>[note](#)</sup>) and He establishes His millennial kingdom (Rev 20:4<sup>[note](#)</sup>).

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**Steven Cole** - There has always been speculation about the Second Coming of Christ, but that is especially true as we come to the close of the millennium. The Y2K computer problem has added fuel to the fire, as many Christians believe that God will bring judgment as computers around the world fail to function on January 1, 2000. As early as 1991 I read about a group that was predicting the end of the world as the year 2000 draws near, but the unique thing is that this group is completely secular. It is called the Society for Secular Armageddonism, based in California (of course!). They describe themselves as "a non-religious group dedicated to promoting public awareness of the coming end of the world." They believe that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, the many environmental concerns, the AIDS epidemic, the population explosion, and numerous other such issues are all proof that the end is near and we don't need God to do it for us. It will be a strictly do-it-yourself apocalypse.....Bible prophecy is not given so that we can sit around and speculate about what will happen in the future. It is always given so that we can apply it to how we live in the present in light of what God has promised to do in the future. Specifically, it is crucial that we understand personally how to be in God's kingdom, because Jesus makes it clear that His awful judgment will fall suddenly and certainly on everyone who is not in His kingdom. ([The Present and Future Kingdom](#))

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**John MacArthur** gives some excellent advice regarding the interpretation of this section which deals with prophecy, specifically the Second Coming of Christ..

I am aware that when you get into prophetic passages...that you get into things that are controversial and people disagree. The way you deal with this is to apply to the text the very same principles of interpretation that you would apply to any text, whether it's prophetic, narrative, historical, doctrinal, polemical, prose or poetry, etc...And so, the way you approach a passage that is prophetic that deals with the future...the Second Coming of Christ, is to apply the same principles of interpretation. Now, having done that, we will then uncover the revealed truth as much as has been revealed. That will also reveal to us that there is much that has not been revealed. No part of theology has as much mystery in it as that which deals with the future. There is no part of the Word of God that leaves us with more questions than those passages that deal with what has not yet happened. We understand then that we are going to be left with some mystery and that is fine. We don't want to leave a true interpretation and get caught up in speculating....Neither do we want to say that just because we do not understand some aspects, then we do not accept aspects that are clear. We take what the Word of God says about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ exactly the way we would take what the

Word of God says about the First Coming. We interpret it the clearest and simplest and most straightforward way we can. You will find as we do that it will be clear and understandable because the Lord wants us to know this truth. And what we do not know we are content not to know and leave with Him. So regarding the Second Coming, what we do know is this: The world will end with the return of Jesus Christ. There is much speculation in the secular world about what's happening to the planet. The environmentalists are trying to protect and preserve the planet from everything they think shortens its potential life and therefore human existence. We have those who are looking into the sky through telescopes waiting for some asteroid to smash into the earth. But I am here to announce to any one who wants to listen exactly how the world is going to end, because the Bible tells us life as we know it will end with the return of Jesus Christ to earth --the literal, physical, bodily return of Jesus Christ who will come back in the same way that He left. In Acts 1:9-11, while He was speaking with His disciples, He ascending into heaven behind the clouds.

And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:9-11) (**Ed:** His return then will be [1] literal, [2] in His physical body, [3] in the clouds, [4] from Heaven to earth).

Now the Bible repeatedly mentions the Second Coming, giving many descriptions and elements associated with that great event. There are a number of features to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. It is called a **day**, but it is a day because it is a singular epoch but it has many components. It involves the rapture of the church, followed by a period called the tribulation, a seven-year period of judgment on the earth. The second three and a half years of that are escalated, fierce, devastating judgment, culminating in the actual return of Christ to the earth with the redeemed saints who have been with Him in glory to destroy all the ungodly and to alter the earth as we know it and to establish His kingdom for a 1,000 years.

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are a flame of fire (SPEAKS OF RETURNING IN JUDGMENT), and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. 13 He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. 15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations (SEE [STONE THAT CRUSHES THE STATUE](#) IN Daniel 2), and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. 16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev 19:11-16-[note](#))

At the end of the [1000 years](#) He will destroy the universe and create a new heaven and a new earth which will last forever (2 Peter 3:10-[note](#), cf Rev 20:11-[note](#), Rev 21:1-[note](#)). The ungodly will spend forever in the Lake of Fire prepared for them and for the devil and the fallen angels (Mt 25:41, 46, see eternal punishment). That scenario from the rapture (SEE [Harpazo](#)) through the seven-year tribulation ([Daniel's Seventieth Week](#)), through the [1,000-year Millennial Kingdom](#) culminating in the new heaven and the new earth, encompasses various aspects of the great event of the return of Jesus Christ. And the Bible fills that understanding with amazing detail. If you do not take the detail at face value as it is laid out in the Scripture using the normal approach to interpreting anything that you would interpret in an ancient document, implying the same principles of understanding, but instead say that it does not mean what it appears to mean in the normal sense of language, **then we have absolutely no idea what it means.**

**If it doesn't mean what it says,  
then whatever you say it means is meaningless to me  
because you would then have to have some secret insight into the mind of God  
when God Himself has not made it clear to anyone else.**

So, we believe that God reveals His truth in order for us to understand. That's why the book of Revelation begins with a unmistakable sentence, "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear (or understand) the words of the prophecy." (Rev 1:3) You're blessed if you read it and understand it. How could you be blessed if you read it and didn't understand it? Blessing comes with reading and understanding. And so we can know many details. A two-volume commentary I wrote on Revelation is nearly a thousand pages just going through the details of the book of Revelation. You can go through the...the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and 25 and in Luke 21 and Mark 13, and you can find the marvelous letters of Paul to the Thessalonians, 1 Thessalonians, 2

Thessalonians and how they look at the future. You can read Isaiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel. You will find vast amounts of material looking into the future and the glorious return of Christ. There is an abundance of material, but nonetheless there is still an element of mystery about the future and the things we don't know about the future I suppose could be summed up in this simple way. We don't know **when** and we don't know **who** and we don't know **how**. We don't know exactly how this is all going to happen in detail. We don't know when it's going to happen. And we don't know who all the principle players are. We obviously know Christ is coming back, but apart from that, we don't know who the Antichrist is, who the false prophet is, who are the rulers and the kings who set themselves against the Christ as spoken of in Ps 2:1-4. We don't understand all of those elements. But that should not surprise us because 1 Peter 1:10-11 says the writers of the Old Testament did not understand **when** and **who**. They could not even imagine who the Messiah would be or when He would come. And similarly there are some elements of the Second Coming that we cannot know for sure. ([Sermon](#))

## AN ESSENTIAL DOCTRINE: DOCTRINE OF THE SECOND COMING

**George Peters** in [The Theocratic Kingdom](#) has a summary of the reasons the modern Church should study and internalize the truth of Jesus' Second Coming. This excerpt is from his [Proposition 183. The doctrine of the Kingdom and its related subjects have a direct practical tendency](#). Peters writes under [Observation 5](#)...

[It is only requisite to point out how the New Testament uses the doctrine of the Second Advent](#), in order to show how essential it is to Christian doctrine, duty, and character. This we will do in the briefest manner. It is given:

- 1, to interest us in a blessed coming, Matthew 23:39; Luke 13:35 and 21:27; II Thessalonians 1:10; Hebrews 9:28; I Peter 1:7, 13; Revelation 22:7, 20;
- 2, to encourage faithfulness by a reward, Matthew 16:27 and 24:47; II Thessalonians 1:7–11; II Timothy 4:8; Revelation 22:12;
- 3, to bring out the hope of reward in a "regeneration," Matthew 19:28–29; Acts 3:19–21;
- 4, to avoid deception, Matthew 24:23–27; Luke 17:23–24; II Timothy 4:1–5;
- 5, to hold forth the culmination of the age, Matthew 24:30, etc.;
- 6, to show the condition of the world, Matthew 24:37–39; Luke 17:26–30; I Thessalonians 5:1–4;
- 7, to teach a translation, Matthew 24:39–41; Luke 17:34–36; I Thessalonians 4:17;
- 8, to urge to watchfulness, Matthew 24:42 and 25:13; Mark 13:33, 37; Luke 12:35–37 and 21:34–36; I Thessalonians 5:4–6; Revelation 16:15;
- 9, to influence to constant readiness, Matthew 24:44 and 25:1–13 and 22:11; Luke 12:35–40;
- 10, to incite ministerial fidelity, Matthew 24:45–47; Luke 12:42–44; I Thessalonians 2:19–20; II Timothy 4:1–5; I Peter 5:1–4;
- 11, to rebuke ministerial unfaithfulness, Matthew 24:48–51; Luke 12:45–48;
- 12, to teach the condition of the Church, Matthew 25:1–12; Luke 18:8; II Thessalonians 2:1–12;
- 13, to hold forth coming judgment, Matthew 25:19, 27, 31–46; II Thessalonians 1:8–9; Jude 14–16; Revelation 1:7 and 19:11–16;
- 14, to show us His majesty and glory, Matthew 26:64 and 25:31 and 24:30; Mark 13:26 and 14:61;
- 15, to a confession of Christ, Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26;
- 16, to incite prayer, Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36; I Peter 4:7; Revelation 22:20;
- 17, to waiting, II Thessalonians 3:5; I Corinthians 1:7; I Thessalonians 1:10; Luke 12:36;
- 18, to expectation and looking, Titus 2:13; Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 9:28; II Peter 3:12, 14; Revelation 1:7;
- 19, to love and desire, II Timothy 4:8; Romans 8:23; II Corinthians 5:2; Revelation 22:20; Titus 2:13;
- 20, to promised honor, Luke 12:37, 39; Matthew 24:46–47; I Peter 1:7; II Thessalonians 1:10; I Peter 5:4;
- 21, to occupation during postponement of Kingdom, Luke 19:11–27; Matthew 25:14–30;
- 22, to encourage joy and peace in approaching redemption, Luke 21:28; John 16:16–33; I Thessalonians 1:10;
- 23, to impart comfort, John 14:1–3, 28; II Thessalonians 1:7; II Timothy 2:12;
- 24, to bestow assurance, Acts 1:11 and 3:19–21; Romans 11:26; Luke 21:34, 36;
- 25, to test character, I Thessalonians 1:9–10 and 5:4–9; I Corinthians 1:7–8;
- 26, to avoid misjudging, I Corinthians 4:5;
- 27, to remembrance and celebration of His Coming, I Corinthians 11:26;



28, to inspire hope in the resurrection, I Corinthians 15:23; Philippians 3:20–21; I Thessalonians 4:13–18;  
 29, to inculcate moderation, Philippians 4:5;  
 30, to excite heavenly mindedness, Colossians 3:1–4;  
 31, to arouse brotherly love, I Thessalonians 3:12, 13;  
 32, to future rejoicing in successful labor, I Thessalonians 2:19–20;  
 33, to sanctification, I Thessalonians 5:23; I John 3:2–3;  
 34, to comfort in bereavement, I Thessalonians 4:18;  
 35, to urge steadfastness, II Thessalonians 2:1–2; I Timothy 6:14; I Peter 5:4;  
 36, to consideration of Antichrist and his doom, II Thessalonians 2:8;  
 37, to infuse diligence and activity, II Timothy 4:1–8; II Peter 3:14;  
 38, to mortification of the flesh, Colossians 3:4–5; Titus 2:12–13; Luke 21:34; II Peter 3:12;  
 39, to soberness, I Peter 1:13; I Thessalonians 5:6; Philippians 4:5;  
 40, to regard it as the great hope, Titus 2:13; I Peter 1:13; Colossians 3:4;  
 41, to induce perseverance, Revelation 2:25 and 3:3, 11;  
 42, to an abiding with Christ, I John 2:28 and 3:2;  
 43, to patience under trial, James 5:7–8; II Thessalonians 3:5 and 1:4–10; I Peter 4:12–13;  
 44, to patience, Hebrews 10:36–37; James 5:7;  
 45, to a proclamation, Titus 2:11–15; I Corinthians 1:4–10; II Timothy 4:1–8;  
 46, to suitable preparation, Revelation 16:15;  
 47, to urge men to turn to God, Acts 3:19–21; Revelation 43:3;  
 48, to enforce obedience, I Timothy 4:13–14; II Timothy 4:1;  
 49, to bring salvation, Hebrews 9:28;  
 50, to coming gladness and exceeding joy, I Peter 4:13.

**This can be greatly enlarged, as e.g. pertaining:**

- 1, to induce sincerity, Philippians 1:9–10;
- 2, to holy conversation and godliness, II Peter 3:11–13;
- 3, to brotherly love, I Thessalonians 3:12–13;
- 4, to confidence, Philippians 1:6;
- 5, to a hope of a crown, Revelation 3:11;
- 6, to manifestation of saints, II Corinthians 5:16; Colossians 3:4;
- 7, to retribution, II Thessalonians 2:7–8;
- 8, to promised dominion and authority, Matthew 16:27; I Corinthians 4:5, etc.;
- 9, to future kingship and priesthood, Revelation 1:6;
- 10, to reigning on the earth, Revelation 5:10, and 20:4;
- 11, to Jewish restoration, conversion, and supremacy, Romans 11:15, etc.;
- 12, to the binding of Satan, Revelation 20:1–6;
- 13, to the deliverance of creation, Romans 8:19–23;
- 14, to the new heavens and new earth, II Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1;
- 15, to the New Jerusalem, Revelation 21:10, etc. Any reader of the present work will see the multiplicity of subjects with which our doctrine stands related and interwoven. Hence the extreme significance of the adjuration of the Apostle, II Timothy 4:1–8 (comp. Lange, Conybeare and Howson, Alford, etc.)

**Luke 17:23 “They will say to you, ‘**Look** there! **Look** here!’ Do not go away, and do not run after them.**

**KJV Luke 17:23** And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

- Luke 17:21; 21:8; Matthew 24:23-26; Mark 13:21-23
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:23-25 7 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur (excellent prophetic summary - highly recommended)

**Related Passages:**

Luke 21:8 And He said, “See to it that you are not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’

and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them.

Matthew 24:23-26 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him. 24 "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. 25 "Behold, I have told you in advance. 26 "So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them.

Mark 13:21-23 "And then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ'; or, 'Behold, He is there'; do not believe him; 22 for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect. 23 But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance.

## SECOND COMING: FALSE ALARMS

**They will say to you, 'Look there! Look here!'** - Keeping in mind the context is the Second Coming, the "**they**" would be those who are making false, erroneous statements about His Second Coming. One of the more recent and notorious "false alarms" was the book by [Edgar Whisenant](#) entitled "[88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will be in 1988](#)." (See "[What Went Wrong...](#)")

Rod Mattoon quips "I love the study of Bible prophecy. Unfortunately, many folks who are interested in Bible prophecy today are not interested in spiritual growth and maturity. They are curious, but not consecrated in serving Jesus Christ. Through the years, I have found that they will come to church if you preach on Bible prophecy, but if you preach on their responsibilities as Christians, they are gone with the wind! They want to be *thrilled* but not *chilled* with their sobering duties to the Lord. They are out of balance. The study of Bible prophecy should make us more faithful in church and a better worker in the church. If all that you do is sit on the pew, you have missed the message of preparing for the Rapture." ([Treasures from the Scriptures](#))

**Do not go away, and do not run after them** - Implied in Jesus' exhortation is that there will be no need to chase after these prophecy mongers (my term) for it will be clear beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus is returning when the veil of heaven is torn away! I have taught prophecy for years and sadly even some of those who have studied the clear teaching (such as passages like Lk 17:22-37) still feel a compulsion to run after every new "prophetic wrinkle." What they should be doing is be walking worthy of the Gospel so that they will have no fear of His face as John describes in 1 John 2:28 ([note](#))

Now, little children, **abide** ([present imperative](#) = not a suggestion but a command to continually make this your lifestyle, something only possible by continually being filled with the Spirit) in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

**A T Robertson** - Do not rush after those who set times and places for the second advent. The Messiah was already present in the first advent ([Luke 17:21](#)) though the Pharisees did not know it. (Word Pictures in the New Testament)

### Related Questions:

- [What does it mean that there will be false christs in the end times?](#)
- [Is it possible to know when Jesus is coming back?](#)
- [How should Christians respond when someone claims to be Jesus reincarnated?](#)
- [Are we living in the end times?](#)
- [Does the Bible prophesy a one-world government and a one-world currency in the end times?](#)
- [How should a Christian react to all the doomsday predictions out there?](#)

## WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE SECOND COMING?

While all true followers of Christ surely long for His return, the question arises as to why do we long for it? Dr John MacArthur gives an excellent answer to this question, an answer that I have never really heard before, at least not presented as he does. I think you may be surprised at what he thinks is the primary goal of the Second Coming of Jesus (bolding and references added)...

This particular sermon by Jesus in Luke 17 focuses not on the **chronology** of the sequence but on the **nature** of His coming. And the idea really is to convey to the Jews, both the Pharisees and the disciples of Jesus, both those who rejected Him and those who accepted Him, that their expectation of His Second Coming as a wonderful, joyous, happy celebration **needs to be altered** because the reality of His Second Coming is that **it**

**will be the most horrific event the world has ever seen.** Yes, it will result in the establishment of His long promised Kingdom (ED: E.G., SEE Rev 11:14-15-note WHERE HIS KINGDOM IS DESCRIBED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SECOND OF 3 WOES REPRESENTING THE POURING OUT OF GOD'S WRATH ON THE WORLD). Yes, it will result in righteousness and peace and joy prevailing upon the earth (cf Ro 14:17-note). Yes, Jesus Christ will establish His throne in Jerusalem and will reign over the whole earth (Isaiah 2:2-note). Yes, it will be begin only with the righteous, those who are alive on the earth (HAVING SURVIVED THE HORRORS OF THE ANTICHRIST) at the establishment of that Kingdom and the saints who have been with Him in heaven returning with Him (Rev 19:14-note where "armies" include saints - see parallel description of "called and chosen and faithful" in Rev 17:14-note) so that you have the glorified and the earthly saints together making up the inhabitants initially of that Kingdom. Yes, it will be a restored earth. Life will be very different here. The lion and the lamb will lie down together. Children will play in a snake pit, etc (Isa 11:8-note). Those things which are part of the curse in our world today will be reversed in that age (ED: See characteristics of the Millennium). It will be a time when knowledge fills the whole earth (cf Hab 2:14-note) and wisdom reigns supreme. But, before the establishment of that Kingdom, it will be the [Day of the Lord](#) in the sense of judgment. Judgment, the likes of which the world has never seen, judgment that surpasses all past judgments put together. It will be the worst judgment ever and will be the total destruction of all the ungodly who will be sent to hell forever as Jesus establishes His reign of righteousness.

**The Jews did not understand that aspect of the Second Coming** (ED: AND NEITHER DO MANY CHRISTIANS!) They assumed that the Messiah would come and set up His Kingdom and for them it would be joy, bliss, knowledge, wisdom, peace and righteousness. It would be an opportunity for the Jews to be proud of their condition rather than experience the humiliating oppression that they had endured for centuries. But the truth is, because they rejected their Messiah and because the world has continued to reject the Messiah, before the Messiah comes to set up His Kingdom, there must be a horrific global judgment (ED: THIS JUDGMENT IS DESCRIBED IN DETAIL IN REVELATION 6-19).....

And so the Second Coming will be a time of judgment experienced by the whole world. This is part of the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ that we do not like. There is a bitterness and a sadness. But part of loving Jesus' appearing as Paul said in 2 Ti 4:8-note is not just that He appears to establish His righteous Kingdom, but that He appears to put an end to sin and global rebellion. He appears to bring a put an end to the dishonor, the reproach and the scandalous, blasphemous attitudes that prevail in the world toward God and toward Christ (ED: IT IS DIFFICULT TO WATCH A MOVIE WITHOUT HEARING JESUS' MIGHTY NAME USED AS A CURSE WORD! AND THAT'S EVEN PG-13 MOVIES!) and toward the blessed Holy Spirit. The Second Coming will not be just a time of righteousness on the positive side, but will be a time of the destruction of the sinful world system over which Satan and demons rule (cf 1 Jn 5:19). And when saints are found under the altar in Revelation 6:10-note saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" They are not only crying for the His righteousness to enter the world, but they are crying for an end to sin. It's much like the prophet Habakkuk who said a similar thing in Hab 1:2. It's what the psalmist said, "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." (Ps 69:9) The psalmist is saying in essence "I feel the pain when Your name is dishonored. How long, O God, is Your name going to be dishonored." It's the same thing that Jesus said when He made a whip at the beginning and ended His ministry and cleansed His Father's house. It's that same attitude that longs for God to be vindicated and glorified and exalted and Christ to be lifted up and worshiped and not to be so dishonored as He is today.

**Spiritual maturity can be defined in those terms. The spiritually mature are those who look for the Second Coming not for any personal gain but for the glory of Christ.** That's what spiritual maturity is. It's when you love His appearing **for His sake**. It's when you long for His appearing **for His sake**. It's when you're so caught up in wonder, love and praise toward Christ that you want to see Him vindicated, you want to see Him exalted, you want to see the glorious manifestation of the children of God not just for the sake of the children of God as wonderful as that is, but **for the sake of the One who has made us the children of God, our glorious Lord Jesus Christ**. You can understand the words of the psalmist who says that the reproaches that fall on You also fall on me. You feel that pain when You're dishonored.

(ED: THIS BEGS AN IMPORTANT QUESTION - YOU DO FEEL THE PAIN OF THE REPROACHES OF CHRIST DON'T YOU WHEN YOU ARE WATCHING A MOVIE AND ALL OF A SUDDEN THEY USE HIS NAME IN VAIN? OR YOU ARE IN A CONVERSATION WITH SOMEONE AND THEY INTERJECT HIS NAME AS A CURSE WORD? DO YOU NOT FEEL HIS PAIN? DO YOU TURN THE MOVIE OFF? DO YOU SHARE JESUS WITH THE PERSON WHO HAS JUST USED THE NAME ABOVE NAMES IN

VAIN? AS AN ASIDE, I REALIZE THIS QUESTION PUTS A DAMPER ON MANY/MOST MODERN MOVIES WHICH ARE MOVING MORE AND MORE TOWARD "R-Rated" OR EVEN "MA -Rated." IF YOU LIKE MOVIES BUT YOU ARE PAINED TO HEAR HIS NAME TAKEN IN VAIN, LET ME SUGGEST YOU CONSIDER FILTERING OUT THE BLASPHEMY, CURSING, SEX, ETC BY USING AN INTERNET BASED PROGRAM CALLED [VIDANGEL](#). I HAVE BEEN USING IT TO GREAT ADVANTAGE WITHOUT ANY LOSS OF CONTINUITY OF THE FLOW. AND IF YOU FIND THAT FILTERING THE OBJECTIONABLE CONTENT RESULTS IN SAY REMOVING 15 MINUTES OF A 90 MINUTE MOVIE, THEN YOU NEED TO ASK YOURSELF "SHOULD I BE WATCHING IT ANYWAY, EVEN WITH THE FILTERING?" JUST A THOUGHT TO CONSIDER. I AM NOT YOUR JUDGE!)

(Dr MacArthur continues) It grieves me when our Lord is dishonored. It grates on me. It pains my heart when He is dishonored by those who are anti-Christ, anti-God and it is sometimes even more painful when He is dishonored by those who name His Name and then misrepresent Him and use His Name to abuse people to further their own ends. But whenever **His name is dishonored, it is a heartache and a heartbreak to those who are spiritually mature.**

When I think about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, I don't want to engage myself in some selfish thinking about the fact that I am going to be there to see the novelty of what the world is like when that happens. His coming is not just a curiosity or a fascination. It has to be beyond that. That's why I'm not interested in the fictional approach to the Second Coming and I'm not interested in a fantasy when it comes to the Second Coming. I'm interested in the reality of the honor and the glory and the majesty of Christ being on display. I want His humiliation to come to an end in this world and His glory to begin. **I don't think many Christians seem to understand that today, many professing Christians.** We live in a very self-centered, very overly narcissistic world. People are programmed to believe that they are the center of the universe, that the whole universe revolves around them. And even God is one of those revolving planets that moves around them to serve them. There's a very superficial understanding of divine glory, a very superficial understanding of divine exaltation, divine honor, the lifting up of the majestic Christ. Really for decades, I think, evangelism efforts in the church in our sort of "minimalist theology" have been mostly sinner-centered and even more so lately. God loves you, He loves you unconditionally. He loves you so much He wants you to be happy. He loves you so much He wants you to be satisfied. He loves you so much He wants you to be healthy. He loves you so much He wants to deliver you from all disappointment and all pain and to take you to heaven. And if you don't let Him do that, He's really upset and unfulfilled. In other words, you're the key to God's fulfillment. It's as if the salvation of the sinner is the goal of redemption and God is the means to that. That's the very opposite of what Scripture teaches. **The glory of God is the goal of redemption and the salvation of the sinner is the means to that.** We are saved only that we might forever give glory to God, that we might forever exalt Christ. That's why we are here doing what we do on the Lord's day and only people who really understand that know what worship is all about. It's not about a mood induced by certain music, it's about being consumed with the honor and glory of God and Christ. And when you have a world where all the emphasis is on personal fulfillment, and then you devise a Gospel that simply fits into that world of personal fulfillment, you cheat people out of understanding the very purpose for salvation, the very essence of worship and the very reason why we hope for the return of Christ.

Look, you've got a whole society of people who think the world exists to fulfill them so they can find their satisfaction, their fulfillment, their purpose, their place, be all they can be, their comfort zone. And if they haven't found it already, then Jesus will help you find it. That will sell! I think that's one reason why 85 percent of Americans say they are evangelicals (ED: SEE [2016 BARNA REPORT ON STATE OF THE CHURCH IN AMERICA](#)). They're happy to have Jesus find their place for them. The gospel then becomes about what Jesus will do to fulfill you as the center of your universe, so that the well-being of the sinner becomes the goal of God's plan. I admit that the well-being of the sinner is a wonderful reality. I embrace that reality with all my passion. But that's only a means to an end and **the end is the glory of God and the exaltation of Jesus Christ and we have been saved not so that we can be fulfilled, but that He can be glorified and in the process we are satisfied.**

But where you have people who think very little about the **honor of Christ** and the **glory of God**, you have people who have **very little interest in the Second Coming** and they are happy to be interested in it as a fantasy, a fiction, or fascination, but **to long for it, to plead for it to cry with John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus?" That's a stretch.** I think for the most part people really don't care whether He comes or not, as long as they're happy, satisfied. And if they die, they get to go to heaven. So you embrace Jesus as the means to your own personal fulfillment. And by the way, there's an ongoing problem there because if Jesus doesn't

deliver what you think He should, you have a problem then in trusting Him and doubt, anger, disappointment and so disillusionment comes in when Jesus doesn't perform to your satisfaction. With that mindset, there is no deep understanding of the nature or the character, the all-glorious exaltation of the Trinity and so it's hard to get very excited about the return of Jesus Christ.....

**The Second Coming is about Christ, it's about His glory and His honor and it's about the end of sin and the beginning of righteousness. That's why we long for it. And if you love the Lord with a mature love, then you have that longing for Him to be glorified.** And really, loving the Lord is the priority, isn't it? (cf Jesus' words in John 14:15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.").

When God gave the Ten Commandments, the first commandment, the foundation of the will of God, this is what God wants as the foundation -- listen to His words, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments." (Exodus 20:2-6) It's always been about loving God, it's always been about desiring the honor of God, the glory of God, the exaltation of God because you love God and that is why in Deuteronomy we are told that we are to "love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." (Dt 6:5) It's about loving God and it is that love for God that becomes consumed with the glory of God and the exaltation of God. We want the humiliation of God to come to an end. We want Christ to be vindicated. We want God to be glorified. We want to live in a world that honors Christ. We want to live in a world that honors God. Ultimately I could never really no matter what happens in the Christian world in which I move, I can never know a full and consummate and settled joy, I could never get the gnawing nagging agonizing pain out of my heart over the way God is constantly treated, and Christ, and the Spirit ... both by those who reject His name and those who name His name. **I want God to be vindicated and Christ and the Spirit. And so I long for the Second Coming because that's when that vindication is accomplished.**

Turn to John 17 for a moment. In John 17 this gives you a perspective that may help you. Jesus is having a conversation, really a prayer with the Father here, this is a great prayer. In John 17:1, Jesus is speaking, lifting up His eyes to heaven. He says to the Father, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You." That is what it's all about. It's all about God's glory and the Son's glory. And if you go down to Jn 17:24 you read this, "Father, I desire that they also whom Thou hast given Me (believers of all the ages) be with Me where I am." Why? "In order that they may behold ... what?... My glory." This is the mature attitude because this is the heart and soul of the truth of the Gospel. We have been saved because the Father is taking out a Bride for His Son to give glory to His Son forever. **We long for the Second Coming because we want to see the glory of Christ manifest. We want to see Christ glorified and in Christ being glorified the Father is glorified and in Christ being glorified and the Father being glorified, we are glorified as well. So that is the driving motivation and purpose for salvation. It is for the glory of God, the glory of Christ and we then by being made glorious become the means of glorifying God and Christ, praising Him for grace.....**

We want God glorified. We want Christ glorified. So the Second Coming is not some kind of adventure. It's not some kind of a fascination. It's not some kind of a curiosity. It is a passion for the mature believer who longs that Christ be glorified. (ED: DOES DR MACARTHUR DESCRIBE YOUR HEART ATTITUDE REGARDING THE SECOND COMING?) ([Luke 17:31-37 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 4](#)) (Suggestion: This would be an excellent message to download and listen to a couple of times, so your heart grasps the fullness of the message from Dr MacArthur's heart. It is a message about the Second Coming which I certainly have never heard.) - [click here to download the audio](#))

**Luke 17:24 "For just like the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day.**

**KJV Luke 17:24** For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.



- **for just like** Job 37:3,4; Zechariah 9:14; Matthew 24:27
- **in** Malachi 3:1,2; 4:1,2; Matthew 24:30; 25:31; 26:64; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:2,8; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:10
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:23-25 7 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 24:27 "For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

### SECOND COMING: VISIBLE GLOBALLY

**For (gar)** is a [term of explanation](#), which should always beg a question from the engaged reader - What is being explained? In this context Jesus is clearly explaining why we do not have to listen to reports of appearances of Christ or to those who set dates about His return, etc. We do not have to run after these false reports.

To be ever looking for the Lord's appearing  
is one of the best helps to a close walk with God.

-- J C Ryle

**Like the lightning** - As **lightning** illumines the entire sky, the whole world will see the coming kingdom. As **lightning** strikes suddenly so too will be the return of the King! When the King returns, His arrival will not be subtle but obvious, not slow but quick, not local but global (how He does that I am not sure) for Jesus Himself taught "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then **all the tribes of the earth** will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory." (Mt 24:30-[note](#)) John adds "**BEHOLD (idou)**, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and **every eye will see Him**, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen." (Rev 1:7[note](#)) There will be no need to turn on your television to check CNN or Fox News and no need to look at your Iphone or send a text alert to a friend, for all you will need to do in this day of His glorious return is lift up your eyes to the heavens from whence He comes!

Regarding the suddenness of His return just as **lightning** is sudden, I often swim laps and if the guards hear thunder they know lightning is potentially nearby so they clear the pool so no one is electrocuted! When Jesus returns there will be no time to "clear the pool" of your life (figuratively speaking), for if you have rejected Him while today is still called today (Heb 3:13), like a **lightning** bolt suddenly striking a swimming pool, it is too late and your fate is sealed forever! Today is the best day of your life to enter into Jesus' Kingdom (Jn 3:3-5). **Do not procrastinate or delay.** James gives us a sobering warning writing "Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit, for **you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow.** You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." (James 4:13-14)

**J C Ryle** - This **suddenness** of Christ's second advent is a solemn thought. It ought to make us study a continual preparedness of mind. Our hearts' desire and endeavor should be to be always ready to meet our Lord. Our life's aim should be to do nothing, and say nothing, which could make us ashamed if Christ were suddenly to appear. "Blessed," says the apostle John, "is he who watches, and keeps his garments." (Rev. 16:15+) Those who denounce the doctrine of the Second Advent as speculative, fanciful, and unpractical, would do well to reconsider the subject. The doctrine was not so regarded in the days of the apostles. **In their eyes patience, hope, diligence, moderation, personal holiness, were inseparably connected with an expectation of the Lord's return.** Happy is the Christian who has learned to think with them! To be ever looking for the Lord's appearing is one of the best helps to a close walk with God. (Luke 17 Commentary)

**Morris** - No matter how difficult the situation becomes, the believer must always reject any claims that Christ has already come and is hiding somewhere (Luke 17:21; Matthew 24:26). When He does first come, believers will suddenly be translated from this earth into His presence (Luke 17:34-36; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17). When He later finally comes again to the earth itself, His presence will hardly be secret, for it will be seen all over the world. (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Luke 17:25 "But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.**

**KJV Luke 17:25** But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.



- **But first He must suffer many things** Luke 9:22; 18:31,33; 24:25,26,46; Matthew 16:21; 17:22,23; 20:18,19; Mark 8:31; Mark 9:31; 10:33
- **be rejected by this generation** 1 Samuel 8:7; 10:19; Isaiah 53:3; Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; John 1:11; 12:38
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:23-25 7 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 17:25-30 7 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Luke 9:22 saying, "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 up on the third day."

Luke 9:44 "Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men."

Luke 12:50 "But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!"

Luke 13:33 "Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Jerusalem."

Luke 18:31-33 Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. 32 "For He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, 33 and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again."

Luke 24:26-27 "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

Acts 17:2-3 And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a large number of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women. 5 But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and attacking the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people.

### SECOND COMING: DELAYED BY HIS DEATH

**But** - This is [term of contrast](#). What is Jesus contrasting? He has just stated His return will be like lightning but now He "puts the brakes on" so to speak. He quickly clarifies to His disciples that He has a "divine delay" which was foreordained by His Father.

**First He must suffer many things** - Before the lightning-like return the sky must turn dark for three hours as He hangs on a rugged cross ("from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour [see comment below]" Mt 27:45; Lk 23:44 - cf [The Passion Of Christ: Reflecting On History's Darkest Hour](#)), bearing the sins of mankind (1 Pe 2:24). At that time Jesus felt the full wrath of His Father, as He experienced the ultimate suffering of separation from His Father, as recorded by both Matthew and Mark

About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?" (Mt 27:46, Mark 15:34)

**Comment:** While not in the Bible, it was the Jewish custom at Passover at 3 p.m., **the ninth hour of the day**, to blow the shofar as the Passover lambs are ritually slaughtered, and Jesus, the Passover Lamb who takes away the sin of the world, lifts up his head and shouts: "It is finished!" (John 19:30<sup>+</sup>)

This was the most unspeakable suffering imaginable and suffering the likes of which we as finite human simply cannot fully comprehend in this life, and probably will never fully grasp even in eternity. We can only bow in worship and adoration to our Lord Jesus Christ for His demonstration of such love that would die such a horrible death in our place. (2 Cor 5:14, Romans 5:8, John 3:16)

Jesus has given us the pattern - the **Cross** first and then the **Crown**! (cf [The Mockery and Majesty of the Cross](#)) We are called to follow in His steps (1 Pe 2:21-[note](#)), but of course our suffering in this life has no atoning value, but it does have eternal value for Paul explains

For momentary, light affliction is producing for us **an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison**, 18

while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor 4:17-18-[note](#))

**NET Note** on **He must suffer** - The Son of Man's suffering and rejection by this generation is another "it is necessary" type of event in God's plan (Luke 4:43-note; Lk 24:7-note, Lk 24:26-note, Lk 24:44-note) and the fifth passion prediction in Luke's account (Ed comment: But despite repeated prophecies they were still a bit dim on His crucifixion as implied by Jesus' post-resurrection statements in Lk 24:25, 26, 46-note)...

Luke 9:22-note saying, "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 up on the third day."

Luke 9:44-note "Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men."

Luke 12:50-note "But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!"

Luke 13:32-33-note And He said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I reach My goal.' 33 "Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Jerusalem."

Luke 18:32-33-note "For He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, 33 and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again."

Acts 1:3+ To these He also presented Himself alive after His **suffering**, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

**Comment:** Regarding "many convincing proofs" see Josh McDowell's classic (great to recommend this to your skeptical friends) - [Josh McDowell's classic "More than a Carpenter"](#) . See also a compilation of prophecies and resources on Messianic Prophecies.

Acts 3:18+ "But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that **His Christ would suffer**, He has thus fulfilled.

**Comment:** It could not be stated more clearly by the Spirit inspired Word of God - Jesus' suffering was foretold in the Old Testament! Most of Israel missed it! One of the most incredible prophecies (they're actually all incredible, especially if one is skeptical!) is found in Daniel 9:24-27 where the prophet predicts the the **date** of arrival and the **fate** of arrival of Messiah in Jerusalem in the last week of His life. See Daniel 9:24-[note](#); Daniel 9:25-[note](#) ;Daniel 9:26-[note](#) ;Daniel 9:27-[note](#)

Acts 17:3+ (v2 = And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures,) explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."

**Comment:** Where was the evidence? This of course had to be "the Scriptures" which at that time were only the Old Testament Scriptures (As an aside, given the [dearth](#) of attention in the modern church to study of the Old Testament, I would add that the OT is fully sufficient to save a soul, as [yours truly was saved in the study of the Minor Prophets](#) in [Bible Study Fellowship](#) - if you are not ia a regular Bible Study then find a local BSF an go through their program. You will never be the same!). "giving evidence" (paratithemi) literally means to lay down alongside, and so to prove by presenting the evidence. The apostle set before them one Old Testament proof after another that Jesus is the Messiah (cf Jn 20:31). Since the Jews in the synagogue already believed [the Scriptures](#), Paul could proceed to use the Scriptures to prove that the promised Messiah must die and rise again, and that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah, using the OT predictive prophecy (of the over 300 OT prophecies of the Messiah, Jesus fulfilled approximately 100 of them at His first coming!) and the historical fulfillment and bodily resurrection. This can be a general pattern for leading to Christ those people who already believe in the God of creation and His inspired word. For those who are hostile or skeptical, however, a different approach is seen when Paul preached to pagans(Acts 14:8-18; 17:15-34).

**Criswell** - Jesus reminds His disciples that the next event is not the day of His return and consummation, but the day of His rejection and death in Jerusalem. His coming and judgment will be as unexpected as was the judgment that came by flood in Noah's day.

**Must** ([present tense](#))(1163) (**dei** from **deo** = to bind or tie objects together, put in prison and also root of **doulos**, bond-servant) refers to what is not optional but needful (binding) out of intrinsic necessity or inevitability. **Dei** describes that which is under the necessity of happening or which must necessarily take place. In order to be the Sin Bearer of the world, it was necessary that the

Passover (Jn 19:14) Lamb of God be sacrificed as a sinless offering to take away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29) Luke explains why Jesus' suffering was a **MUST**, why it was necessary and essential to God's plan of redemption, writing that He was "delivered up by the **predetermined (DEFINITE) plan and foreknowledge of God** (HIS SOVEREIGN CONTROL OF HISTORY), you (PETER IS ADDRESSING THE JEWS) nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men (A REFERENCE TO THE GENTILES, THE ROMAN SOLDIERS, WHO SHARED THE GUILT WITH THE JEWS) and put Him to death (NOTICE THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE "PARADOXICAL" JUXTAPOSITION OF GOD'S SOVEREIGN CHOICE AND MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY - "hands of godless men")." (Acts 2:23)

**Suffer (3958) (pascho)** means essentially what happens to a person experience. It means to undergo something; to experience a sensation, to experience an impression from an outside source, to undergo an experience (usually difficult) and normally with the implication of physical or psychological suffering. See [Why did Jesus have to experience so much suffering?](#)

**Be rejected (apodokimazo) by this generation (genea)** - To whom does Luke refer? In context this refers to the present generation of Jews, but by extension Messiah's rejection has continued throughout all subsequent generations of Israel, of course with the exception of individual Jews who received Messiah by grace through faith.

**MacArthur** elaborates at length on how Jesus coming was delayed by the rejection of His own people, the Jews:

Jesus' coming will be delayed by rejection. **"But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation."** He must suffer many things, suffering meaning particularly His death which He suffered at the hands of Roman executioners but by the will of the Jewish nation and He suffered death also and more importantly at the hands of God by the determinate counsel of God (Acts 2:23KJV) as God's chosen Sacrifice for sin. He cannot come until He suffers. This is part of His work....And the gospel preachers who go out in the book of Acts talk about how the Messiah had to suffer. He had to be the sacrifice for sin. So His coming will be delayed by His suffering, but also by ... notice this carefully, verse 25, being rejected by this genea, this nation. He will be rejected by Israel. Now listen because this is a very important issue in eschatology. Jesus cannot return until Israel's rejection ends. Jesus cannot return until Israel's rejection ends.

**Now turn to Acts 3 which is early in the history of the church** The church is born in Acts 2. Christ has ascended to heaven (Acts 1:9-11). The feast of Pentecost has come. The Spirit has descended (Acts 2:1-4).. The church has been established. Now the gospel begins to be preached. And i Peter the preacher in Acts 3:12, speaks to the people and He says, **"Men of Israel,"** (Jews) Acts 3:14, "You disowned the holy and righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you." Pilate offered them Jesus or Barabbas and they took Barabbas instead of their Messiah (Mt 27:20-21, 26) And they "put to death the Prince of life." (Acts 3:15) So He indicts them for their crime against the Messiah, the One whom God raised from the dead. And that makes it clear that they were opposed to God..."a fact to which we are witnesses." All the Apostles were eyewitnesses of His resurrection.

Then He goes on to say, "On the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus that has strengthened this man whom you see and know," the man they had just healed, "and the faith that comes through him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all. Now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also, but the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled." (Acts 3:16-17) That doesn't lessen their culpability, that doesn't lessen their guilt, that doesn't lessen their punishment for having rejected and executed the Son of God. But it did fit the purpose of God. God overrules the worst that men can do to accomplish the best that He can do (cf Ro 8:28). And so the point is you Israelites killed your Messiah in the worst act of rejection in history. You have been guilty of killing the prophets and those that were sent to you throughout your history. And now you have done the worst, you have killed the Messiah. But in the midst of that, God accomplished His purpose in Christ's suffering.

Acts 3:19+ "Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that **times of refreshing** may come from the presence of the Lord." That phrase (**times of refreshing**) refers to the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom will not come until you repent and turn to God...He cannot send Jesus back (ED: REMEMBER PETER IS SPEAKING AFTER THE FIRST COMING AND THE RESURRECTION) until you repent and turn. As long as the nation Israel stays in unbelief, Jesus will not return. Acts 3:21 says, "Whom heaven must receive," which describes the present time, for He is in heaven at the right hand of the Father, "Whom heaven must receive until **the period of restoration of all things.**" That phrase is another description of the Kingdom of God. When everything is restored, paradise regained, "About which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time." He is referring to all the Old Testament prophecies about the Kingdom, about the fulfillment of promises to Abraham and promises to David. The Kingdom of God cannot

come until the Messiah suffers (that has been accomplished) and until the rejection of Israel ends (ED: MESSIAH'S REJECTION BY ISRAEL IS STILL ONGOING EVEN IN OUR DAY) When they repent and they return and their sins are wiped away, the way Zechariah lays it out in Zechariah chapters 12-14+, then **the times of refreshing will come** and then the Father will send His Son Jesus back to bring **the period of restoration**, describing Messiah's glorious Kingdom on a restored, rejuvenated planet where He reigns and fulfills all the promises to Abraham and David and reiterated through all the prophets. (ED: FOR A DESCRIPTION OF THE MANY CHANGES IN THIS RESTORED KINGDOM SEE [Millennium and schematic map of the new topography to come](#))

Now with that in mind, go down to Acts 3:25+. "It is you (talking to the Israelites, men of Israel) who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.'" God made a promise to Abraham that He would bless that nation Israel (Genesis 12:3) and through that nation Israel He would bless the world. God made a promise to Israel that He would make them a blessing and bless them. God made a salvation promise to Israel. Now one might assume that when they rejected their Messiah, crucified their Messiah, spit on their Messiah, wanted nothing to do with their Messiah, turned their back on their Messiah, even rejected the obvious reality that He had risen from the dead and would not be convinced by unmistakable evidence, that in light of such open, repeated rejection, God would have said to them, "I am finished with you. It is over. The [Amillennialists](#) believe that all the promises once given by God to Israel are now fulfilled in the church and that there is no more future for Israel (ED: SEE DISCUSSION OF THIS HORRIBLE FALSE TEACHING OF [REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY](#) WHICH SADLY IS GAINING POPULARITY EVEN AMONG MANY IN THE MODERN REFORMED MOVEMENT!). But I want you to go back to Acts 3:25 and notice that it does not say, "It is you who are the sons of the prophets and **WERE** the sons of the covenant." It says, "You **ARE** ([present tense](#)) the sons of the prophet and of the covenant." It is an irrevocable covenant. **It is an unconditional covenant by which God promised to bless and save that nation to give them both salvation and a Kingdom and that covenant has not changed.** But Acts 3:26, **'For you first, God raised up His Servant.'** Did you hear that? Even after you killed Him, God raised Him for you (ISRAEL) first and sent Him to bless you by turning everyone of you from your wicked ways. The salvation opportunity was still open to Israel and the covenant was still in effect, by which God actually raised Jesus from the dead who had been placed on the cross by the will of the Jews to then bring about the salvation that would ultimately come to the nation Israel! (ED: PONDER THAT THOUGHT - AMAZING GRACE INDEED!)

So, when Israel looks on Him whom they have pierced, mourns for Him as an only Son in the words of Zechariah 12:10 and comes to understand what they have done, and repents and returns to God, a fountain of cleansing will be open to them from God (Zechariah 13:1+), and **THEN** God will send Jesus Christ.

If you study the prophets carefully and you study what our Lord teaches carefully and you study the book of Revelation carefully, you will see that the salvation of Israel will happen in the future. Paul says it in Romans 9-11, clearly all Israel will be saved (Romans 11:26-27-[note](#)), the timing of that event begins in the mid-point of the seven year Tribulation (SEE DISCUSSION OF THE SEMINAL SIGNAL - THE UNVEILING OF THE ANTICHRIST - Mt 24:15ff+). And while God's judgments are being poured out on the world, it is during that same time that in Israel ""Many will be purged, purified and refined" (Da 12:10+) so "that two parts (2/3's of the Jews) in it will be cut off and perish; But the third (1/3) will be left in it." (Zech 13:8+) So one third of the nation of Israel will be saved, redeemed. There will be two Jewish preachers the whole world will come to know in Revelation 11:3+ ("I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy fortwelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."), there will be 144,000 Jewish evangelists, twelve thousand from every tribe preaching the gospel all over the world (Rev 7:4-[note](#)). And Israel will come to faith in her Messiah. They will come to faith during the period called the [Great Tribulation](#), the last 3.5 years of [the seventieth week of Daniel](#). The first "Sixty-nine weeks" ended at the time Messiah came and died (Da 9:25-26+). The Jews will come to faith in their Messiah and once they come to faith, then the Kingdom will come when the judgments of God are finished. **But the Kingdom cannot come until Israel believes.** You may ask then "Aren't we waiting for the salvation of Israel?" No, the Rapture of the church comes first, when we will be caught up to be with the Lord in the air (1 Thes 4:17+). And then as the judgments begin to fall on this world (Revelation 6:1ff+), some of those judgments will fall on the rebels in the nation of Israel. but out of the rebellious nation, God will purify a people for Himself and 144,000 preachers who are Jews will preach His gospel to the ends of the earth during that time while the precursors to the final judgment are actually going on warning men of greater judgment to come and calling them to repentance and salvation. **When Israel comes to the point of faith, then Christ can return and set up His Kingdom.** (See [Luke Commentary](#))(See also Dr MacArthur's related study [The](#)

**Rejected** (593)(**apodokimazo** from **apo** = off, away from, pictures separation of one thing from another + **dokimazo** = to test, examine, scrutinize to see whether a thing is genuine or not) means to reject or refuse to accept something or someone after testing, scrutiny or examination. The preposition **apo-** speaks of separation and thus conveys the picture of rejecting completely. And so apodokimazo means to examine and deem as useless. The Jews, including the seemingly Torah "educated" religious leaders, examined Jesus and concluded that He did not pass their test for the kind of Messiah they were expecting, one who would conquer the Romans and bring in the visible Kingdom of God, the Messianic Age. They, like most Jewish people in the past 2000 years, missed the truth of the suffering Messiah (cf [The Jewish Tradition Of Two Messiahs](#)). They missed the clear presentations of His suffering as detailed by their prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 53:1-12 (see [notes below](#)) and Psalm 22:1-31 and so they rejected the Lamb of God (See also [Messianic Prophecies](#)).

The prophet Isaiah had predicted Messiah's rejection

Isaiah 53:3+ He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. ([Spurgeon - Isa 53:3 Man of Sorrows](#))

**Generation** (1074)(**genea**) gives us our English genealogy) literally refers to those descended from a common ancestor and in this sense refers to a race, a clan or descendants. BDAG writes that one meaning of genea is " the sum total of those born at the same time, expanded to include all those living at a given time and freq. defined in terms of specific characteristics."

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### [Why do most Jews reject Jesus as the Messiah?](#) (Gotquestions.org)

**Answer:** The Jews rejected Jesus because He failed, in their eyes, to do what they expected their Messiah to do—destroy evil and all their enemies and establish an eternal kingdom with Israel as the preeminent nation in the world. The prophecies in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 describe a suffering Messiah who would be persecuted and killed, but the Jews chose to focus instead on those prophecies that discuss His glorious victories, not His crucifixion.

The commentaries in the Talmud, written before the onset of Christianity, clearly discuss the Messianic prophecies of Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 and puzzle over how these would be fulfilled with the glorious setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah. After the church used these prophecies to prove the claims of Christ, the Jews took the position that the prophecies did not refer to the Messiah, but to Israel or some other person.

**The Jews believed that the Messiah, the prophet which Moses spoke about, would come and deliver them from Roman bondage and set up a kingdom where they would be the rulers.** Two of the disciples, James and John, even asked to sit at Jesus' right and left in His kingdom when He came into His glory. The people of Jerusalem also thought He would deliver them. They shouted praises to God for the mighty works they had seen Jesus do and called out, "Hosanna, save us," when He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey (Matthew 21:9). They treated Him like a conquering king. Then, when He allowed Himself to be arrested, tried, and crucified on a cursed cross, the people stopped believing that He was the promised prophet. They rejected their Messiah (Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus Who is called Christ?" They all \*said, "Crucify Him!" = Matthew 27:22).

Note that Paul tells the church that **the spiritual blindness of Israel is a "mystery"** that had not previously been revealed (Romans 9:1-11:33). For thousands of years, Israel had been the one nation that looked to God while the Gentile nations generally rejected the light and chose to live in spiritual darkness. Israel and her inspired prophets revealed monotheism—one God who was personally interested in mankind's destiny of heaven or hell, the path to salvation, the written Word with the Ten Commandments. **Yet Israel rejected her prophesied Messiah, and the promises of the kingdom of heaven were postponed.** A veil of spiritual blindness fell upon the eyes of the Jews, who previously were the most spiritually discerning people ("But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ." 2 Cor 3:14). As Paul explained, this hardening on the part of Israel led to the blessing of the Gentiles who would believe in Jesus and accept Him as Lord and Savior. ("25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in 26 and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB." - Ro 11:25-26)

**Two thousand years after He came to the nation of Israel as their Messiah, Christ is still (for the most**



**part) rejected by the Jews.** Many Jews today (some say at least half of all living Jews) identify themselves as Jewish but prefer to remain “secular.” They identify with no particular Jewish movement and have no understanding or affiliation with any Jewish biblical roots. The concept of Messiah as expressed in the Hebrew Scriptures or Judaism’s “[13 Principles of Faith](#)” is foreign to most Jews today. (ED COMMENT: PRINCIPLE 12 = “12. The belief in the arrival of the Messiah and the messianic era [ED: WHAT JESUS REFERS TO AS THE FUTURE ASPECT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD].” It is the custom of many congregations to recite the Thirteen Articles, in a slightly more poetic form, beginning with the words *Ani Maamin*--“I believe”--every day after the morning prayers in the synagogue.) But one concept is generally held as universal: Jews must have nothing to do with Jesus! Most Jews today perceive the last 2,000 years of historical Jewish persecution to be at the hands of so-called “Christians.” From the Crusades, to the Inquisition, to the pogroms in Europe, to Hitler’s Holocaust—Jews ultimately believe that they are being held responsible for the death of Jesus Christ and are being persecuted for that reason. They, therefore, reject Him today. **The good news is that many Jews are turning to Christ today. The God of Israel has always been faithful to keep a “remnant” of believing Jews to Himself. In the United States alone, some estimates say that there are over 100,000 Jewish believers in Jesus, and the numbers are growing all the time.** (ED: HALLELUJAH. PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF JERUSALEM! Ps 122:6)

#### Related Resources:

- [Why do people reject Jesus as their Savior?](#)
- [Is Isaiah 53 'The Suffering Servant' a prophecy about Jesus?](#)
- [Where do the Hebrew Scriptures prophesy the death and resurrection of the Messiah?](#)
- [Is Jesus the Messiah?](#)
- [I am Jewish, can I become a Christian?](#)
- [Why did Jesus have to experience so much suffering?](#)
- [Romans 11 Does God Have a Future for Israel?](#) by Gil Rugh
- [The Jewish Problem](#) - small book by Jewish believer David Baron (written in 1891-interesting!)
- [The Jewish Tradition Of Two Messiahs](#) - booklet from Radio Bible Class
- [Scandalous Savior -- How Jesus Revealed the Heart of God](#) - booklet from Radio Bible Class

The following links are to a 15 hour course by **Dr Anthony Garland** on Romans 9-11 the section in which Paul explains that God is clearly not finished with the nation of Israel as sadly is being taught by many who call themselves evangelicals! (espousing the horrible, Christ dishonoring belief known as [Replacement Theology!](#))

- [Romans 9:1-5 Paul's Sorrow Concerning Israel](#)
- [Romans 9:6-13 Children of the Promise](#)
- [Romans 9:14-24 The Potter and the Clay](#)
- [Romans 9:25-33 A Remnant Will be Saved](#)
- [Romans 10:1-13 The Righteousness of God](#)
- [Romans 10:14-21 Has Israel Not Heard?](#)
- [Romans 11:1-6 God Has Not Cast Away The Jews](#)
- [Romans 11:7-15 Life from the Dead](#)
- [Romans 11:16-24 Two Olive Trees](#)
- [Romans 11:25-36 The Salvation of Israel](#)

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**Josh McDowell** has the following explanation of Isaiah 53 -

There are three main interpretations regarding the identity of the servant in this passage. One interpretation is that the passage refers to the nation of Israel as a whole. Another is that the passage refers to a righteous remnant within the nation of Israel. The third is that the text speaks prophetically of an individual to come in the future—perhaps the Messiah or some other individual.

Which of those three interpretations is the best supported? Although the national interpretation became predominant after the eleventh century AD, in previous centuries, it was just one of several interpretations. **The Targum understands the text to refer to the Messiah—a warring, conquering king, while the Talmud generally takes the passage to refer to the Messiah or other individuals.** The passage has even been understood to refer to Jeremiah, e.g., by Sa’adiah Gaon, an influential Rabbinic leader in the ninth century. The earliest and most authoritative traditional Jewish sources, thus, generally interpret the text to refer to an



individual, and this individual was most commonly interpreted to be the Messiah. (Brown, AJOJ, III.49–57)

Reference is made to the servant of the Lord in a few different ways in Isaiah 40–51. In some cases (Isa 41:8, 9; 42:19; 43:10; 44:21; 45:4; 48:20), the title refers to national Israel. In others (49:3, 5–7; 50:10), the title refers to a righteous individual within Israel. Other cases are more ambiguous (42:1; 44:1, 2). The references to the servant as the people of Israel end with Isaiah 48:20. The references to the servant as a righteous individual who represents the nation begin in Isaiah 49 and continue until the conclusion of Isaiah 53.

**The text of Isaiah 53 cannot refer to national Israel for several reasons** For one thing, the Torah promises that if Israel, as a nation, lives righteously before God, then they will be blessed and not afflicted (e.g. see Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28).

Second, Isaiah 52:13–15 tells us that the servant would suffer and then be highly exalted such that rulers would stand in awe of him. These verses make perfect sense in view of a Messianic interpretation, but make little sense if applied to the nation of Israel. Third, the servant is described as being totally righteous. But this is not the picture Scripture gives us of the nation of Israel. Fourthly, the suffering servant's suffering and death are said to bring us redemption and mercy. But this can hardly be applied to the sufferings of Israel, since the nations that attacked Israel were judged and punished by God.

Finally, the text says in Isa 53:8-9, "By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth." Who are "my people"? Surely that is a reference to Israel. That being the case, how can Israel suffer for the sins of Israel, having done no wrong herself? The reference to there being no deceit in the servant's mouth also does not comport very well with the national Israel interpretation, especially in view of Isaiah 6:5, in which the prophet says, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." (Brown, AJOJ, III.49–57)

It is also worth appreciating the context for Isaiah 53, which names what the suffering servant will bring with him: peace, joy, salvation, and the rule of God. Isaiah writes:

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Your watchmen shall lift up their voices, with their voices they shall sing together; for they shall see eye to eye when the LORD brings back Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, you waste places of Jerusalem! For the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. — Isaiah 52:7–10

The text speaks, echoing Isaiah 40:1-31, of the Lord himself coming to Zion in order to redeem his people. The New Testament writers speak of all these blessings as coming through Christ, who is the fulfillment of these prophecies.

The first verse of Isaiah's song further speaks of the servant being "high and lifted up" and being "exalted" (Isa. 52:13), which resembles Isaiah's description of Yahweh as sitting on his throne: "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up" (Isa. 6:1).

**Luke 17:26 "And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:**

**KJV Luke 17:26** And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

- **just as it happened** Genesis 7:7-23
- **in the days of Noah** Job 22:15-18; Matthew 24:37-39; Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:19,20; 2 Peter 2:5; 3:6
- **it will be also in the days of the Son of Man** Luke 17:22,24; 18:8
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:25-30 7 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

**SECOND COMING:**

## TIMING UNEXPECTED, WARNINGS GIVEN

**And just as it happened in the days of Noah** - Unlike many who question the veracity of Genesis, Jesus does not question the global flood that destroyed all living beings on earth. He does not say "just as it may have happened." Jesus, the Word of Truth, declares that **it happened!** Notice the word "**as**" introduces a [term of comparison](#), in this case specifically a [simile](#). When you encounter terms like this in Scripture, consider the "**5P's**" - **P**ause to **P**onder the **P**assage in context, then **P**actice it in the **P**ower of the Spirit

**Wiersbe** - Jesus then used two Old Testament events to illustrate the **certainty** and the **suddenness** of His coming: the Flood (Gen. 6–8) and the destruction of Sodom (Gen. 19). In both examples, the people of the world were caught unprepared as they engaged in their everyday activities. (Borrow [Be courageous](#) Luke 14-24)

What happened in the days of Noah ([see also note](#) from gotquestions)? A catastrophic global flood that killed every man, woman and child on earth except for Noah and the 7 members of his family. Given that life spans in Noah's day was up to 1000 years of age, undoubtedly families were large and the world was populated by millions of people (perhaps even billions but that is speculation). The point is that the judgment of God came on the world for it was filled with godlessness and wickedness. And yet God had given the world ample warning that judgment was coming and that men must repent of their wickedness. Noah was a "**preacher of righteousness**" (2 Peter 2:5-[note](#)) and was building his ark most think for 100-120 years ([note](#)), sufficient time for his message of **righteousness** to be heard. But no one had ears to hear.

And so just like the ancient world, the "terminal" generation will not have ears to hear the clarion warnings that sound the alarm that the curtain is about ready to rise on the final act of world history as we know it and that the end is truly near. The horrendous events of Revelation 6-19 will be a clear warning of final divine judgment and even the world has some sense of their impending doom and destiny, the apostle recording their pitiful cry "to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (Rev 6:16-17-[note](#))

**See related resources:**

- [How was the flood in the time of Noah just?](#)
- [What can we learn from the life of Noah?](#)
- [How long did it take Noah to build the ark? How long was Noah on the ark?](#)
- [What was the purpose of the flood in the time of Noah?](#)
- [What is the canopy theory?](#)

**Ryrie** - Luke 17:26-27 in the days of Noah. See Genesis 6:1-22 The activities mentioned are not wrong; the people were unprepared for the judgment of the flood because they did not heed God's warnings through Noah.

And so just as there were warnings in Noah's day, so too there would be three major warnings preceding the return of the King. The entire world will have exposure to two groups of supernaturally empowered witnesses in the first 3.5 years of the 7 year Tribulation, the two Jewish witnesses (Rev 11:3-14-[note](#)) and the 144,000 Jews who presumably serve as evangelists to the world (Rev 7:3-9-[note](#)). At the midpoint of the seven year Tribulation, preceding the beginning of the [Great Tribulation](#), that last period of devastating divine Seven Bowl judgments, God will send "another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters." (Rev 14:6-7-[note](#), notice this warning preceding the end will fulfill Jesus' prophecy in Mt 24:14-[note](#) a verse often used to stimulate missions)

**MacArthur** asks "How could the world seeing judgment falling all around them, how could the world hearing supernatural preachers preaching the gospel still reject? In fact, in the book of Revelation they actually shake their fist at God, curse Him because they know it's coming from Him (Rev 16. The world goes on with its busy routines. The world goes on engulfed in its sin. The world rejects all the warnings, all the messages. Jesus said it, that 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'" (Lk 16:31-note)

One might ask why in the face of such horrendous judgment, even judgment that the world recognizes as clearly divine, why would continue to be opposed to God and His Gospel? Paul gives us a clue writing that first "they **did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved**. (THEY REJECTED THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL - cf 2 Th 1:8) And for this reason (BECAUSE THEY REJECTED THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL) God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that **they all may be judged who did not believe the truth**(GOD IS FAIR - THE POINT IS THEY DID NOT BELIEVE

THE GOSPEL WHEN THEY HAD A CLEAR OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR AND HEED IT. ONLY THEN WILL THEY RECEIVE THE DELUDING INFLUENCE), but took pleasure in wickedness (THEIR EVIL ACTIONS WILL DEMONSTRATE THEIR HEART'S DEVOTION IS NOT TO GOD BUT TO SELF). (2 Th 2:10-12).

**So it will be also in the days of the Son of Man**- Jesus finishes the comparison. The phrase **days of the Son of Man** refers to the time period of the end, the days that precede the return of **the Son of Man**, a phrase used to refer to the Messiah, based on Daniel's description in Daniel 7:13 (see notes). So just as in Noah's day "the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Ge 6:5) in the days of **the Son of Man**, the depth of depravity of the world will reach a new [nadir](#), an "all time low," a veritable "[abyss](#)" (pun intended), "for all the nations (will) have drunk of the wine of the passion of her (Babylon's - cf Rev 17:1-2-[note](#)) **immorality**, ([porneia](#)) and the kings of the earth have **committed acts of immorality** ([porneuo](#)) with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by **the wealth of her sensuality**." (Rev 18:3-[note](#)) In the present age, Paul explains that the depth of wickedness is held in check (praise God for that truth!), explaining that "the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way." (2 Th 2:7) Mystery in the context of the NT is not like our English "mystery" (e.g., a "mystery novel") but is divine truth that is hidden but divinely revealed. In the case of the mystery of lawlessness, it is partially revealed but will not attain to its full revelation until the days of the Son of Man. Paul explains that the "**Restrainer**," the Holy Spirit will be "taken out of the way." In other words in this horrible time, the holy influences of the Holy Spirit which serve to hold back the flood of evil in men's hearts will be removed unleashing a "global flood" (pun intended) of wickedness the likes of which this world has never seen or experienced. And the leader of these days of lawlessness will be the Antichrist ([antichristos](#)), the "**man of lawlessness**" who will be revealed in **the days of the Son of Man** and will masquerade as the long awaited Christos or Messiah.

When do these **days of the Son of Man** occur? These **days** correspond to what is commonly called the **Tribulation**, a seven year period during which God metes out His final judgment on the godlessness of this world. Note that this seven year period is most accurately designated as [Daniel's Seventieth Week](#) (see also [exposition](#) of Daniel 9:27-[note](#)), for the Bible never specifically calls these 7 years "**Tribulation**," but only refers to the last 3.5 years (synonymous with these other time phrases = 1260 days, 42 months, "middle of the week," and time, times, and half a time) as the [Great Tribulation](#). In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus warns the world (those who have ears to hear!) when this horrible 3.5 year period will begin, giving us a very specific, unmistakable event which no one could possibly miss declaring

Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION (THE ANTICHRIST) which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (**AS CLEARLY DESCRIBED IN 2 Th 2:3-4-[note](#)**) (let the reader understand), 16 **THEN** (TIME SENSITIVE WORD - WHEN IS THEN? VERSE 15 COULD NOT BE STATED MORE CLEARLY! UNLESS OF COURSE ONE TRIES TO INTERPRET IT IN A NON-LITERAL WAY AS IS COMMONLY DONE BY MANY EVANGELICAL THEOLOGIANS!) those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. 17 "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. 18 "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. 19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. 21 "For **THEN** (WHEN? CLEARLY THIS REFERS BACK TO Mt 24:15!) there will be a [Great Tribulation](#), such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will (THIS WAS NOT FULFILLED IN THE HOLOCAUST, WHICH WAS ONLY A PREVIEW OF COMING HORRORS AGAINST THE NATION OF ISRAEL WHEN 2/3'S OF THE NATION WILL PERISH - Zechariah 13:8 BUT PRAISE GOD 1/3 WILL RECEIVE THEIR MESSIAH - Zechariah 13:9!).(Mt 24:15-21-[note](#))

**The days of the Son of Man** - Note that this is not speaking of the Rapture of the Church which I believe will occur before the Day of the Lord begin (See diagram below).

**MacArthur** comments "This is telling us some very important things about people's attitudes and life at the time when the Lord will come in judgment. This is not looking at the Rapture of the church, but is referring to the devastating return of Christ in judgment. In the phrase **days of the Son of Man** notice that the word **days** is plural, not just the one great epoch (ED: THE ACTUAL DAY HE RETURNS) but the days and events that make up the time preceding His return, when He comes to judge the world and establish His Kingdom, and so would include that period that we call the Tribulation. During the seven year Tribulation life will be like it was in Noah's day and like it was in Lot's day. It is going to be circumstances like in Noah's day and Lot's day, judgment like in Noah's day and Lot's day and deliverance like in Noah's day and Lot's day. What am I saying? Think about it. How was it in the days of Noah and in the day of Lot? Let me just give you a little quick reminder. Genesis 6-8 records the Flood that drown the entire world, the days of Noah. There were millions of people alive at that time. Since creation people lived nearly a thousand years which was plenty of time to proliferate huge families which would fill the earth. When the great Flood came, it drowned the entire world of millions of people and spared only Noah, his wife, their three sons and three wives ... eight people survived. That was it, that's the record of Genesis 6-8.

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## A PROPOSED TIMELINE OF THE DAY OF THE LORD

THE CHURCH IS  
REMOVED BEFORE  
GOD BEGINS TO  
POUR OUT HIS  
WRATH ON THE  
CHRIST REJECTING  
WORLD.

Heaven and earth  
fled away  
(Revelation 20:11-[note](#))  
v

<b>Pre-Tribulation Rapture</b>	<b>The Tribulation</b> <b>70th Week of Daniel</b> (Da 9:27-note) Jesus Returns at end of the 7 Years as King of king and Lord of lords	<b>(2) Day of Lord</b> encompasses the Millennium 2 Pe 3:10-note	<b>Great White &lt; Throne</b>
<b>(1a) Day of the Lord begins &gt;</b>	<b>Mid-Tribulation</b> <b>(1b) Day of Lord begins</b> v	<b>1000 Years The Millennial Reign of Christ</b> (Rev 20:4,5,6-notes <a href="#">v4</a> ; <a href="#">5</a> ; <a href="#">6</a> )	<b>New Heaven New Earth</b> (Rev 21:1ff- <a href="#">note</a> )
	<b>3.5 Years</b>	<b>3.5 Years</b>	

You will read descriptions in some commentaries that state the **Day of the Lord** follows the **rapture** of the church **(1a)** ("pre-tribulation rapture"- see discussion of when the rapture occurs) (1 Th 4:13-14-note; 1 Th 4:15-16-note; 1 Th 4:17-18-note), the event which most evangelicals feel immediately precedes the last seven years of Seventy Weeks of Daniel, popularly known as the **Tribulation**, although nowhere in Scripture is this seventieth week of 7 years specifically designated "the Tribulation" (let me know if you find a passage that contradicts this conclusion - remember that "the Great Tribulation" only refers to the last three and one-half years of this seven year period). The alternative inception date is Mid-Tribulation **(1b)**.

First, we must understand the basic timing of this last "Seven Year Period" (Daniel's Seventieth Week) which can be divided into two 3.5 year segments, a conclusion based upon study of Da 9:27 (see notes) and an assiduous study of the synonymous time phrases, 1260 days, 42 months, "middle of the week," and "time, times, and half a time." If these specific identical time phrases are not literal times, then we are left to our imagination to attempt to piece this together. I will place my bets on a literal interpretation of God's Word, remembering that there is absolutely no reason to interpret prophetic Scriptures any differently than one would interpret any other Scripture. To say it another way, men have proposed prophecy must be interpreted differently than other passages, but there is no statement by God Himself stating we are to interpret prophecy differently!

**Daniel** records the following prophecy he received from the angel Gabriel in answer to fervent prayer...

And **he** (the Antichrist) will make a firm covenant with **the many** (the Jews/Israel) for **one week** (one seven year period), but in **the middle of the week** (after 3.5 years) he will **put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering** (in the rebuilt Jewish temple) and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." (Da 9:27-note)

The Lord Jesus quoted from Daniel 9 as He explained the timing of the events immediately preceding His triumphant return because He wanted the Jews (and all mankind) living during the tumultuous time of Daniel's Seventieth Week to have an easily identifiable event that would indubitably signal the beginning of the the Great Tribulation which represents the final outpouring of God's wrath during the last 3.5 years of the Seventieth Week of Daniel...

Therefore when you see the **ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION** (referring to the Antichrist or some desecrating action he makes) which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet (reference to Da 9:27-note, also in Daniel 11:31, 12:11), **standing in the holy place** (indicates the Jewish Temple will be rebuilt, cf Re 11:1, 2- see notes [Re 11:1](#); [11:2](#)) (let the reader understand)... there will be a **Great Tribulation**, (a specific 3.5 year period synonymous with the "Time of Jacob's Distress" in Jer 30:7-note, click other synonyms) such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall... but immediately after **the tribulation** (the Great Tribulation) of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be

shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky (Sign = the Lord returning on the clouds), and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other." (Matthew 24:15-31-[note](#))

Now keeping in mind the timing of this dramatic event described by Daniel and Jesus, read Paul's second letter to the saints at Thessalonica where he addresses the false teaching that the persecution the Thessalonians were now experiencing was part of the great tribulation. He references the same crucial historical event as Daniel and Jesus in order to assure these fearful saints...

"Now we request (plead, implore, beg of) you, brethren, with regard to the coming (parousia) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him (Paul refers not to two events but one event - the rapture he had written about in 1 Thessalonians 4:13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18-see notes 1Th 4:13; 14; 15; 16; 17; 18), that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure (literally "mind") or be disturbed (frightened) (false teaching about the Rapture and the Day of the Lord appears to have had a devastating impact on the Thessalonian saints) either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the **day of the Lord** has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy (a very specific presumably identifiable time of rebellion against God) comes first, and the **man of lawlessness** (the Antichrist) is **revealed** (apokalupto = literally has the veil removed exposing to open view what he had before hidden regarding his evil character. The aorist tense points to a definite time, a specific historical event), the son of destruction (apoleia = ruin not annihilation), who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he **takes his seat in the temple of God** (which Jesus referred to as "standing in the holy place"), displaying himself as being God." (2Th 2:1-4-[note](#))

When does Paul state that the **Day of the Lord** will begin? First, he says "**the apostasy**" will occur. Then he states when and where "**the man of lawlessness**" will be revealed. Specifically he states that the revelation of the Antichrist must precede the **Day of the Lord**. Although many favor the Day of the Lord beginning at point (1a) in the above diagram (after the pre-tribulation rapture), when one compare Scripture with Scripture, there is certainly some support for considering the beginning for the **Day of the Lord** at the midpoint of the 7 Year period of Daniel (1b). Notice that 2 Peter 3:10 teaches that "the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up." This phrase would support the premise that the Day of the Lord is an extended period of time including the judgment of Revelation 6-19, the Millennium in Rev 20:1-10, and ending in Rev 20:11-[note](#) which describes a unique time in the universe, Peter declaring that "presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them." How did they "flee away?" 2 Peter 3:10 would be the most logical answer. And this makes wonderful sense, because after God removes the old universe in which sin occurred (even in the Millennial Kingdom - Rev 20:7-10-[note](#)), and then removes all those guilty of all the sins committed on the earth (Rev 20:11-15-[note](#)), then He will do a new thing, John describing this "new thing" writing "Then I saw **anew heaven and a new earth**; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away (When? 2 Peter 3:10, Rev 20:11-[note](#)), and there is no longer any sea." (Rev 21:1-[note](#))

#### Related Resources:

- [151 pages of articles on pre-tribulation rapture](#), - Master's Seminary Journal
- [Overview of pre-tribulation rapture](#) - Mark Hitchcock
- [What is the day of the Lord?](#)
- More on the Day of the Lord
- Lecture on Revelation, part 4
- [The Day of the Lord by Jeff Miller](#)
- [The Day of the Lord by A C Gaebelein \(1907\)](#)
- [The Day of the Lord by Tony Garland](#)
- [When Does the Day of the Lord Dawn? by Tony Garland](#)

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Question: "[What was it like in the days of Noah?](#)"

**Answer:** The biblical account of Noah begins in Genesis 6. Approximately 1,600 years had passed since the creation of Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:26-27). As the earth's population exploded in number, it also exploded with evil. Long forgotten was the righteous sacrifice of Abel (Genesis 4:4) as "the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). Verses 11 and 12 say, "Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on



the earth.” However, “Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord” (verse 8).

When Jesus described the events that will surround His second coming, He said, “Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all” (Luke 17:26–27). Jesus was pointing out that, although the people of Noah’s day were totally depraved, they were not the least bit concerned about it. They were carrying on the events of their lives without a single thought of the judgment of God. Noah is described as “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5), meaning he had spent years warning his friends and neighbors what the Holy God was about to do. No one listened.

The depravity and ungodly lifestyles of the entire world at that time were enough to cause the Lord to “regret that He had made man” (Genesis 6:6). Many scholars believe that part of the need to destroy every human being except Noah and his family was the sin mentioned in Genesis 6:1–4, when “the Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them.” As evil reproduced and overtook the world, the most merciful act God could perform was to start over.

It is interesting that God allowed Noah nearly one hundred years to complete the building of the ark. Through all that time, God patiently waited (1 Peter 3:20). Scripture seems to imply that Noah preached to the people of that time about what was coming (Hebrews 11:7). They did not believe Noah and were content with their wickedness and idolatry. Their hearts were hard and their ears dull. No one repented, and no one cared to seek God.

Jesus said that the world will be much the same before He returns to set up His earthly kingdom (Matthew 25:31–33). He warned us to “be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” 2 Timothy 3:1–4 gives us a clear picture of the state of the world before Jesus comes and most likely also describes the world in the days of Noah. That verse says, “But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.” It is becoming increasingly obvious that, to understand what the world was like in the days of Noah, we only need to watch the evening news.

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**Henry Morris** -days of Noe. Many of the characteristics of the days of Noah and Lot are indeed recurring today, indicating that the return of Christ may be soon. These include the following:

1. Physical appetites (Luke 17:27)
2. Secularism (Luke 17:28)
3. Disregard of marriage (Matthew 24:38)
4. Uniformitarianism (Hebrews 11:7)
5. Disobedience (1 Peter 3:20)
6. Ungodliness (Jude 15)
7. Unbelief (2 Peter 2:5)
8. Blasphemy (Jude 15)
9. Population increase (Genesis 6:1,11)
10. Hedonism (Genesis 4:21)
11. Technology (Genesis 4:22)
12. Violence (Genesis 6:11,13)
13. Corruption (Genesis 6:12)
14. Sexual Promiscuity (Genesis 4:19; 6:2)
15. Homosexuality (Genesis 19:4,5)
16. Organized Satanic activity (Genesis 6:1-4) (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Luke 17:27 they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.**

**KJV Luke 17:27** They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

- Luke 12:19,20; 16:19-23; Deuteronomy 6:10-12; 8:12-14; 1 Samuel 25:36-38; Job 21:9-13; Isaiah 21:4; 22:12-14; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:25-30 7 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

## **SECOND COMING: DESTRUCTION AS IN NOAH'S DAY**

**They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage**- There is nothing inherently evil about these activities. The point is that life was going on as usual, with no concern for their eternal destinies. So too, in the end times, these normal human activities will be occurring.

**MacArthur** - Now how do we define the days of Noah? Well let me just give you a simple definition. They were wicked days. In fact, in Genesis 6:5 it says that all the imagination or the intent of the hearts of man was only evil continually. They were vile. They were evil. Evil was rampant. Evil was dominant. Evil was singular. It was such a wretched and evil period of time that demon-possessed men were ravaging women ([see note](#)). It was a culture of demonic possession and it was a culture of sexual abandonment and all manner of wretchedness. So vile that God drowned the entire world. ([Seven Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 3](#))

**Until** - This **time sensitive word** indicates their normal activities continued up to the point of the day it began to rain. And keep in mind it had not yet rained on the earth. So too the world in the end times will continue, but they will not be indifferent toward God. They will be mad at God! In the Revelation of Jesus Christ (describing the events that precede and surround His Second Coming) we read "And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and **men blasphemed God** because of the plague of the hail, because its plague \*was extremely severe." (Revelation 16:21+).

**The day that Noah entered the ark**(Ge 7:1, 7, 13+) - Notice that Noah was safe from the flood. Even so the Church of Jesus Christ will be rescued from the wrath to come (1 Th 1:10+, 1 Th 4:18+). The **rapture** will remove believers and then the "rain (and 100 lb hailstones) begins to fall" so to speak as the events in Revelation 6-19 begin to sequentially unfold as God unleashes His full judgment on the sin-loving, Christ-rejecting world.

**And the flood came and destroyed ([apollumi](#)) them all** - So just as the global flood destroyed the world, so too the return of Jesus will be marked by global destruction. However, there will be people alive on earth when He returns - both Jews and Gentiles (See Daniel's 70th Week -- column on right of page).

**Destroyed** (622)([apollumi](#) from **apo** = away from or wholly + **olethros** = state of utter ruin <> **ollumi** = to destroy <> root of **apollyon** [Re 9:11+] = destroyer) means to destroy utterly but not to cause to cease to exist. **Apollumi** as it relates to men, is not the loss of being per se, but is more the loss of well-being. It means to ruin so that the person (or thing) ruined can no longer serve the purpose for which he (it) was designed (contrast the "purpose" of believers in Eph 2:10+). The Gospel promises everlasting life to the soul who believes. The failure to possess this life will result in utter ruin and eternal uselessness (but not a cessation of existence).

Luke uses the verb **apollumi** three times in this section (Lk 17:27, 29, 33) in relationship to the Second Coming of the Lord. For those who have received Him as Savior and Lord it will be a time of joy and celebration and worship, but for those who have rejected Him, it will be a time of destruction and the beginning of a deep sense of loss of well-being, including the reality that forever one's life will have no purpose or value except to suffer **eternal punishment** and banishment from the presence of the glory of the Father, the Son and the Spirit (2 Th 1:9+)!

**THOUGHT** - The choice is yours - either RECEIVE JESUS or REJECT JESUS. The consequences of your choice however are not your choice!

Here are all of Luke's uses of **apollumi** - Lk. 4:34; Lk. 5:37; Lk. 6:9; Lk. 8:24; Lk. 9:24; Lk. 9:25; Lk. 9:56; Lk. 11:51; Lk. 13:3; Lk. 13:5; Lk. 13:33; Lk. 15:4; Lk. 15:6; Lk. 15:8; Lk. 15:9; Lk. 15:17; Lk. 15:24; Lk. 15:32; Lk. 17:27; Lk. 17:29; Lk. 17:33; Lk. 19:10; Lk. 19:47; Lk. 20:16; Lk. 21:18; Acts 5:37; Acts 27:34;

**Luke 17:28** "It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building;

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**KJV Luke 17:28** Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

- Genesis 13:13+; Ge 18:20,21+; Ge 19:4-15+; Ezekiel 16:49,50; James 5:1-5
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:25-30 7 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

## **SECOND COMING: WARNINGS AS IN LOT'S DAY**

**It was the same as happened in the days of Lot** -- How did it happen? Suddenly! The judgment came with some warning, but then the judgment was sudden. The events of the 7 year period preceding the Lord's return will be like a series of repeated warnings to the world. For example we read in Revelation 16:9+ that "Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they **blasphemed** the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they **did not repent** so as to give Him glory." So despite these clear warnings, their hearts will be so hardened against God that they will continue in their evil ways even in the face of judgment. This is much like the men of Sodom who were blinded, but continued to try to rape the angels visiting Lot's house! (Ge 19:11-13+)

**MacArthur** explains "In Genesis 19 you have the story of God's destruction of the city of Sodom and another city, Gomorrah, and other cities of the plain out at the south end of the Dead Sea. They were all buried under molten lava, fire and brimstone. It was a holocaust from which only three people were delivered ... Lot and his two daughters, not even his wife survived because of her sin....There's another analogy here that is very helpful. Before the Flood, Noah is taken into safety in an ark. Before the fire and brimstone, Lot and his daughters are taken to safety on a mountain. And before the unfolding of judgment, God will rescue His own. And the ark of safety is **the rapture of the church**, the gathering together of His own and then the judgment begins to be poured out....Noah and his family are caught away, then comes the judgment. Lot and his daughters are caught away (in Ge 19:16+ the angels "seized" their hands and brought them out!), then comes the judgment. In the future, the redeemed and the beloved of the Lord are caught away in those marvelous Rapture passages, we have no hint of judgment, John 14:3+, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18+, 1 Corinthians 15:52+, were caught away and then comes judgment. It is a time of entire devastation. When you have the earth flooded, it is entirely devastated. When you have the area of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah buried under fire and brimstone, it is a time of entire devastation. And when the Lord Jesus comes, He will so devastate this earth that He has to reshape it. This isn't the final [new heaven and new earth](#), but He reconstitutes it in a Edenic like restoration, that's why it's called the **period of restoration** in Acts 3:21+. ([Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 3](#))

**They were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building**- Yes this is true and the description makes it sound like things were fine in the society, but these were very wicked days.

**MacArthur** - How was it in the days of Lot? Lot lived in a city called Sodom. We have a word today called sodomy. We know exactly what that means. That is a homosexual sin. That is a vile kind of behavior drawn out of that city in the plains south of the Dead Sea. What did God do to Sodom? Buried Sodom under fire and brimstone completely. What kind of people lived in Sodom? Read Genesis 19:1-38 and you will find that when two angels came to visit Lot, the men of that city tried to rape the angels. And when God blinded the men of that city, they still tried to feel their way to smash down the door to get to those angels! That was a vile, wretched place. ([Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 3](#))

And so just as the days of Lot were filled with unspeakable evil and the judgment came, so too would those days be like in the future at the end of this age when Messiah returns to judge and destroy the wicked of this world.

**MacArthur** adds "There's no room in this for a [post-millennial view](#). There's no room in this for the world getting better and better and better and better. It is not going to get better. It didn't get better before the judgment fell in Noah's day and it didn't get better before the judgment fell in Lot's day. I don't know how anybody can be a [post-millennialist](#) with that clear teaching of Scripture. It's going to get worse and worse (**ED**: NOT BETTER AND BETTER AS THE POST-MILLENNIALISTS BELIEVE!). Evil men will grow worse and worse says the Word of God (**ED**: cf 2 Ti 3:13-[note](#), cf context = "last days" 2 Ti 3:1-[note](#)). ([Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 3](#))

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**Steven Cole** - As you may know, there are three major views regarding Christ's kingdom. The amillennial view teaches that His kingdom is His spiritual reign over His people in this age. The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob regarding their possessing the land of Canaan and their descendants ruling over the nations are all spiritually fulfilled now in Christ. While I greatly respect many men who hold this view, I reject it. It seems to me that Christ's present rule over His people in this wicked and corrupt

world is a far cry from the glorious kingdom promised in the Scriptures. I agree that Christ's present reign over His people is the initial phase of His kingdom, but I believe that Jesus will literally reign over the nations on the throne of David, in power and great glory.

The postmillennial view teaches that Christ's kingdom will come gradually but certainly as the gospel spreads and triumphs over evil (ED: DOES IT LOOK LIKE THAT IS HAPPENING IN AMERICA IN 2022?!). They often cite Habakkuk 2:14, "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." While I, too, believe that verse, I do not believe that it will be fulfilled before Jesus returns. Our text makes it clear that the world will not be converted when Jesus returns. Rather, it will be going on with self-centered business as usual.

The premillennial view holds that Jesus will return in power and glory to judge this wicked world and establish His kingdom on earth for 1,000 years. This is the view that makes the most sense of the most Scriptures to me. But don't let the variety of views make you throw up your hands and not believe anything! Note that all three views share some things in common: Jesus is coming again bodily, in power and glory. When He comes, He will judge every person. We need to be ready for His coming by trusting Him as Savior and submitting to Him as Lord now. To deny these things that all of the views share in common would be to deny the core of what Jesus Himself taught. ([The Present and Future Kingdom](#))

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#### QUESTION - [Who was Lot in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - Lot was the grandson of Terah, son of [Haran](#), and nephew of Abram (Abraham). He was likely born in Ur of the Chaldeans. Lot's father Haran died unexpectedly, and so Lot was taken in by the rest of his family.

At some point, possibly soon after Haran's death, Lot's grandfather Terah decided to relocate his entire family to Canaan. They ended up settling in Harran instead. After Terah's death the Lord spoke to [Abram](#) and told him to resume the journey to Canaan, promising to make him into a great nation (Genesis 12:1–3). Abram set out on this journey, and Lot went with him.

When they came to Bethel, Abram's and Lot's shepherders quarreled because there was not enough land to support the amount of livestock each man owned. So Abram presented an offer to Lot: they would part company, and Lot could have first pick of the land he would occupy (Genesis 13:8–9). Lot chose the land near the Jordan River, as it was rich and lush. Abram took other land, and [Lot left his uncle](#) and settled his family near the sinful city of Sodom (Ge 13:12).

The consequences of Lot's selfish choice soon caught up with him. Five kings in the area (the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboyim, and Bela - **ED NOTE: ANOTHER NAME FOR "BELA" IS ZOAR**) were subjects of King Kedorlaomer, and they rose up against him (Genesis 14:4). But Kedorlaomer gathered his allies and defeated the rebelling kings. The victors seized all the goods in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and they took Lot and his family as part of the plunder (verse 12). When Abram heard of this, he and his fighting men attacked Kedorlaomer's army at night and won. He recovered Lot and his family, as well as all the goods the army had taken from Sodom and Gomorrah (verse 16). Afterward, Lot returned to Sodom.

But Lot's hardships did not end there. [Sodom](#) was very wicked, and, although Lot was counted as a righteous man (2 Peter 2:7–8), he allowed his family to become entrenched in the city and its culture. God resolved to utterly destroy Sodom and Gomorrah and the other cities of the plain for their great sin, but in His grace He sent two angels to Sodom to rescue Lot and his family from the fate of the city. As Lot sat in the gateway of the city, he saw the two angels and, mistaking them for regular men, invited them to stay at his house (Genesis 19:1–2). The angels told Lot they would spend the night in the town square, but Lot insisted strongly, knowing how dangerous the people of the city were. The angels accepted the invitation, and Lot prepared a meal for them and provided a place for them to sleep.

Before the angels settled in for the night, a crowd of men from all over the city gathered outside of Lot's house. They demanded access to Lot's guests in order to have homosexual relations with them (Genesis 19:4–5). We can see the effect the city had upon Lot here, for, in an effort to protect the men under his roof, Lot offered his two daughters instead (verse 8). But the crowd wanted the men, and they tried to break into Lot's house. The two angels quickly pulled Lot inside, shut the door, and struck the men outside with blindness. They ordered Lot to gather up his family and leave immediately, for they were going to utterly destroy the city and everyone in it (verses 12–13).

Lot spoke with his sons-in-law, but they refused to leave, considering Lot's warning about impending judgment to be a joke (Genesis 19:14). When the time of destruction drew near, Lot was still hesitating, and the angels had to physically drag Lot, his wife, and his two daughters out of the city (Ge 19:16+). They urged Lot to go to the mountains, but Lot requested leave to run to the nearby town of [Zoar](#) (ED: SEVERAL WRITERS CALL IT "LITTLE SODOM") instead (Ge 19:17–20+). The Lord granted this request and vowed to spare that city for Lot's sake. As they fled, Lot's wife looked back at Sodom. Because she loved Sodom and desired it, the Lord turned her into a [pillar of salt](#) (verse 26; see also Luke 17:30–33).

After the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot was afraid to stay in Zoar. So he settled in the mountains with his daughters. He was destitute—he had lost everything when Sodom was destroyed—and so the family lived in a cave (Genesis 19:30). It was here that Lot's daughters devised a disturbing plan to continue the family line: they would get Lot so drunk that he didn't know what was happening and then sleep with him (Ge 19:31–32+). Both women became pregnant and had sons named Moab and Ben-Ammi. These two boys would become the father of the Moabites and the Ammonites (verses 37–38). Many years later, when the Israelites were on their way to the Promised Land, the Lord ordered His people to preserve the Moabites and the Ammonites on Lot's behalf (Deuteronomy 2:9, 19).

**Much of Lot's life is a picture of the consequences of greed and the negative influence of a sinful environment. Lot knew God, but he chose to live among people who would lead his family into sin and complacency. But Lot's story is also an illustration of God's great mercy—in spite of Lot's poor choices, God saved him and his daughters from a violent end in Sodom and preserved his line throughout the ages. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)**

**Luke 17:29 but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.**

**KJV Luke 17:29** But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

- Genesis 19:16-25 -see commentary; Deuteronomy 29:23-25; Isaiah 1:9; 13:19; Jeremiah 50:40; Hosea 11:8; Amos 4:11; Zephaniah 2:9; Matthew 11:23,24; 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 1:7; Revelation 11:8
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:25-30 7 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 3](#)- John MacArthur

## **SECOND COMING: DESTRUCTION AS IN LOT'S DAY**

**But on the day that Lot went out from Sodom-** Lot **went out from Sodom** but not without supernatural help! Moses records "But he (LOT) hesitated. So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for the compassion of the LORD was upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city." (Ge 19:16+)

**It rained fire and brimstone from heaven** - God did not judge Sodom **until** Lot left. Similarly He will not pour out His final wrath on the world until His Bride is removed from the sinful world. This is of course only indirect evidence, but it does support the premise of a pre-tribulation [rapture](#). One might ask if Sodom had a warning, much like Noah **preacher of righteousness** warned the pre-deluvian world? While the details are not given, Peter describes God's rescue of Lot writing that...

if He **rescued righteous Lot**, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men 8 (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds), then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, (2 Peter 2:7-9+)

So **Lot** was **righteous** (by grace through faith, the same way righteousness was imputed to Abraham in Genesis 15:6+). Presumably Lot's lifestyle was a testimony of his righteousness (albeit it seems to have been quite weak), but we cannot be definitive (see Ge 19:7+ "do not act wickedly," but sadly it was followed by his horrible offer of Ge 19:8+).

**And destroyed ([apollumi](#)) them all** - Just as destruction came suddenly and decisively on Sodom, so too it will come suddenly on the godless rebels of this world. And like Sodom all will be destroyed, either at His return or when He judges them at the [judgment of the Sheep and Goats](#), a judgment which will determine who enters into His Messianic Kingdom....

"But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory** (SO THE TIMING OF THIS JUDGMENT IS CLEARLY ASSOCIATED WITH HIS SECOND COMING - cf Mt 24:30+ = "SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great **glory**."), and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. 32 "All the nations (ALL THAT HAVE SURVIVED THE GREAT TRIBULATION) will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats (THIS SEPARATION IS DESCRIBE IN Lk 17:31-32 BELOW); 33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. 34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the **kingdom** prepared for you from the foundation of the world (THOSE WHO WERE IN THE



INTERNAL, INVISIBLE KINGDOM BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH WILL NOW MOVE INTO THE VISIBLE, ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD). 35 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' 37 "Then the righteous (THE ARE RIGHTEOUS BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH IN MESSIAH - AND THEIR "WORKS" ARE EVIDENCE OF THEIR INTERNAL RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THE ENABLING POWER OF THE INDWELLING SPIRIT) will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? 38 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 39 'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 "The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.' 41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, **'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;** 42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; 43 I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' 44 "Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' 45 "Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46 "These will go away into **eternal punishment**, but the righteous into **eternal life** (NOTE THE CLEAR CONTRAST OF TWO ETERNAL FATES - THERE WILL BE NO "ANNIHILATIONISM" NOR "UNIVERSALISM" FOR THE LOST!)." (Mt 25:31-46)

**Luke 17:30 "It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.**

**KJV Luke 17:30** Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

- Luke 17:24; 21:22,27,34-36; Matthew 24:3,27-31; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:13; Revelation 1:7
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:25-30 7 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

## **BOTH NOAH AND LOT ARE PREVIEWS OF JESUS' SECOND COMING**

**It will be just the same** - Life will go on as usual (apathy and indifference to the things of eternity because they are so focused on the temporal "stuff" that will vanish, including even their lusts, 1 Jn 2:17-[note](#), etc.), but in those days "many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another" (Mt 24:10-[note](#)) and "because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold," (Mt 24:12-[note](#)) and evil will exponentially multiply because the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit will have been removed (2 Th 2:7). So yes, that **day** will be the same in quality, but it will be greatly magnified in quantity (so to speak)! You don't want to be here on that DAY! Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved (Acts 16:31) by the Son, "Whom God raised from the dead, that is Jesus, Who rescues ([rhuomai](#)) us from the wrath to come (WHICH WILL COME TO [FULMINATING](#) FRUITION ON THE DAY JESUS IS REVEALED TO THE UNBELIEVING WORLD!)." (1 Th 1:10-[note](#))

**This is an amazing statement!** Just like in Noah's day and Lot's day, in the days preceding the devastating judgment of the world, the people of earth (see [earth dwellers](#)) will continue to carry on life as usual. Revelation 6-19 describes the world experiencing the most horrific judgments in the history of the world. The four horsemen of the Apocalypse will be authority "over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth." (Rev 6:8-[note](#)), "a third of the earth was burned up," (Rev 8:7-[note](#)), "a third of the sea became blood and third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life died and a third of the ships were destroyed," (Rev 8:8-9-[note](#)), "a third of the waters became wormwood; and many men died from the waters," (Rev 8:11-[note](#)), "a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were smitten, so that a third of them might be darkened and the day might not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way," (Rev 8:12-[note](#)), men were tormented "for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man, and in those days men will seek death and will not find it," (Rev 9:5-6-[note](#)), "A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone" (Rev 9:18-[note](#)), and the list goes on and on. And life continued for the world. And instead of being radically impacted by these judgments "the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk." (Ro 9:20-[note](#)) Even after the two witnesses were killed by the Antichrist John writes that "their dead bodies will lie in the

street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. And those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth." (Rev 11:8-11-[note](#)) In fact instead of repenting, the world rejoiced over the death of God two witnesses.

**Ryrie on it will be just the same** - Until the time of Christ's return, many people will be prosperous, feel secure, and be unprepared for His return (as in the days of Noah and Lot).

**Wiersbe** - Luke 17:30–36 describes what will occur when Jesus Christ returns in judgment to defeat His enemies and establish His kingdom on earth (Rev. 19:11–20:6). Believers in every age of the church can take warning from these verses, but they apply in a special way to Israel at the end of the age (see Matt. 24:29–44). When Jesus comes for His church and takes it to heaven, it will happen "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. 15:52). Nobody taking part in the rapture of the church need worry about being on a housetop or in a field and wanting to get something out of the house! However, when the Lord returns to the earth, His coming will first be preceded by a "sign" in heaven (Matt. 24:30–31), and some people might try to hurry home to rescue something. "Remember Lot's wife!" (Borrow [Be courageous](#) Luke 14-24)

**On the day that the Son of Man is revealed**([apokalupto](#)) - God has a "prophetic calendar," a divine "day-timer," if you will, and on His calendar is "**THE DAY**," designating that glorious DAY when His Son returns to take sovereign and total control of the earth (Mt 24:30+), having received the scroll, the "title deed" to the earth. [Play the song "O Glorious Day!"](#)

**Martin Luther** said he only had two days on his calendar—today and "**that day**."

**D. L. Moody** said, "I felt like working three times as hard when I discovered that my Lord was returning again."

**THOUGHT** - What does the [imminency of His return](#) do to your heart? Are you filled with trepidation or are you stirred to action? Do you have a zeal to redeem the time for the days are evil (Eph 5:16+ - see Redeem the Time)? Do you daily seek to be filled with the Spirit of Jesus that you might daily abide in the Vine (Jn 15:5) and daily bear fruit for His glory and your eternal reward (note order - His glory before your fruit, fruit that will last throughout eternity = Jn 15:16)?

**Is revealed** (601)([apokalupto](#) from **apó** = from + **kalúpto** = cover, conceal, English = apocalypse - see study of [apokalupsis](#) English = apocalypse) literally means to remove the cover from and so the idea is to remove that which conceals something. Almost all of the NT uses have a figurative use, especially to some aspect of spiritual truth that was heretofore hidden but now has the "lid removed" so that it can be seen (understood). Thus **apokalupto** means to "take the lid off", to remove the cover and thereby to expose to open view that which had heretofore not been visible, known or disclosed. The idea is to make manifest something previously secret or unknown. It describes removing of a veil (an unveiling) or covering thus exposing to open view what was concealed. In this case it is a PROPHECY of the day when the "VEIL OF HEAVEN" is torn asunder, the Son of Man will be MADE KNOWN to the entire world (including the unique group known in Revelation as the [earth dwellers](#)), much to their surprise, dismay, chagrin and eternal loss! If the first 100 (+/-) prophecies of His First Coming were perfectly fulfilled, you can rest assured that this terminal prophecy will be fulfilled in the days of the terminal generation! Woe!

All the NT uses of **apokalupto** - Matt. 10:26; Matt. 11:25; Matt. 11:27; Matt. 16:17; Lk. 2:35; Lk. 10:21; Lk. 10:22; Lk. 12:2; Lk. 17:30; Jn. 12:38; Rom. 1:17; Rom. 1:18; Rom. 8:18; 1 Co. 2:10; 1 Co. 3:13; 1 Co. 14:30; Gal. 1:16; Gal. 3:23; Eph. 3:5; Phil. 3:15; 2 Thess. 2:3; 2 Thess. 2:6; 2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Pet. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:1

Given that the name [Antichrist](#) means "instead of Christ" (or against Christ), it is notable that this same verb, **apokalupto**, is used to describe the revealing of the grand imposter, Paul writing...

Then (WHEN? SEE 2Th 2:7+) that lawless one ([Antichrist](#)) will be revealed (HE REVEALS HIS TRUE COLORS IN Mt 24:15 WHICH MARKS THE MIDPOINT OF THE LAST 7 YEARS OF THIS AGE - SEE CHART ON "DANIEL'S 70TH WEEK") whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming (**on the day that the Son of Man is revealed**) (2 Thessalonians 2:8+)

**The prophet Daniel** pictures the holistic holocaust that will occur on that fateful day when **the Son of Man will be revealed** describing His return as a **Stone** that crushes the **statue** (SYMBOLIZING THE GENTILE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD) writing

"You (Daniel describing to King Nebuchadnezzar his dream) continued looking until a **STONE** was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them (THE WORLD SYSTEM ARRAYED AGAINST THE CHRIST). 35 "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were

crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that **not a trace of them was found** (COMPARE JESUS' PHRASE HERE "DESTROYED THEM ALL"). But the **STONE** that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (THIS IS A DESCRIPTION OF THE VISIBLE ASPECT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD). (Daniel 2:34-35-see in depth commentary)

"In the days (A CRUCIAL TIME PHRASE) of those kings (Da 2:42-note = THE KINGS IN THE DAYS OF THE "TOE" PHASE = A TEN NATION LOOSE CONFEDERACY = Da 7:24-note) the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed (THE VISIBLE ASPECT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD), and that kingdom will not be left for another people; **it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms** (THIS IS THE RESULT OF THE RETURN OF CHRIST), but it (THE KINGDOM OF GOD) will itself endure forever. 45 "Inasmuch as you saw that a **STONE** was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy (IT WAS TRUSTWORTHY THEN AND IS TRUSTWORTHY TODAY - IT WILL BE FULFILLED - JUST AS THERE ARE OVER 300 PROPHECIES OF THE MESSIAH AND ABOUT 100 WERE FULFILLED AT HIS FIRST COMING, THE REMAINING 200 OR SO WILL BE PERFECTLY FULFILLED AT THE SECOND COMING WHEN THE STONE CRUSHES THE STATUE. YOU CAN STAKE YOUR LIFE ON THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD! HAVE YOU DONE THAT?)." (Daniel 2:44-45-see in depth commentary)

**Luke 17:31** "On that day, the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house must not go down to take them out; and likewise the one who is in the field must not turn back.

**KJV Luke 17:31** In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

- **the one who is on the housetop** The flat-roofed eastern houses have stairs on the outside, by which a person may ascend and descend without coming into the house; and in walled cities they usually form continued terraces, from one end of the city to the other, terminating at the gates; so that one may pass along the tops of the houses and escape out of the city without coming down into the street.
- Job 2:4; Jeremiah 45:5; Matthew 6:25; 16:26; 24:17-21; Mark 13:14-16; Philippians 3:7,8
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:31-37 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 4](#) - John MacArthur

## THAT DAY WILL DISCLOSE HEARTS

**On that day** - As always [expressions of time](#) beg the question, "What day?" The [context](#) (which is usually the source of the answer) is clear that Jesus is describing **that day** when He returns as the conquering King and "from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev 19:15-16-note).

**That day** is a phrase which would also be a component of the **Day of the Lord** (see preceding [Timeline and discussion](#)). In this context that day is the specific day He returns. While men may know the general time, they do not know the day nor the hour of this frightening, fateful day (Mt 24:36). But when this day comes, it will be obvious to all what is happening and it will come suddenly upon the world.

**MacArthur on housetop** - In that day if you are on the housetop which in the land of Israel were the patios, the gardens. They put potted plants there and had chairs and places to recline and they enjoyed the outdoors on the patio at the top of the house. They had an outside staircase down to the ground. And the warning is, if you're up there and you see the judgment precursors, the preliminary judgments begin to come, don't even go down and inside to get something. Don't do that. Just get out of there. Judgment is coming.

**The one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house must not go down to take them out** - To go down and grab one's "stuff" reflects that to which one's heart is devoted! This is the ultimate "heart check up" beloved! Do you love the eternal

things of Heaven (especially Jesus - cf 2 Ti 4:8) or the temporal trinkets on earth? That is the "divisive" question of the ages! Jesus was [patently](#) clear when He declared that

"No one (GREEK WORD [oudeis](#) IS NOT RELATIVELY NO ONE, BUT ABSOLUTELY NO ONE) can ([dunamai](#) = HAS THE INHERENT ABILITY TO) serve ([douleuo](#) in [present tense](#) = CONTINUALLY SERVING AS A SLAVE, WITH ONE'S WILL TOTALLY SUBMITTED TO AND ENTWINED WITH THE WILL OF THE MASTER) two masters (TWO LORDS = [kurios](#)); for ([term of explanation](#) - JESUS EXPLAINS WHY) either he will hate the one and love ([agapao](#)) the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise ([kataphroneo](#)) the other. You (ABSOLUTELY) cannot serve ([douleuo](#)) God and wealth ("mammon" - [mamonas](#)). (Mt 6:24+)

**And likewise the one who is in the field must not turn back-** The same principle is seen in this analogy, which is dramatically illustrated by Lot's wife, which Jesus brings up in the next verse.

**John MacArthur** emphasizes that when that day comes, it will be [revelatory](#)...The point here is this, when Jesus comes on **that day**, His coming will disclose where people's hearts are. This is a warning not to cling to the stuff of this world....In Luke 21:21 Jesus gives a similar warning "In the day when you begin to see the judgment of God on the horizon, we're going to find out what you really love." .... If you do go back, it demonstrates what you love. That's why I say this is [revelatory](#) of the heart. "Love not the world neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," 1 John 2:15, "And all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world and the world is passing away." (1 Jn 2:16-17) This is a warning to people to make sure that you put the value where the value ought to be. It would be normally reasonable to say if there was some hurricane coming, go down and get your stuff and get to safety, or if there was a fire sweeping your way and you're out in a field, run to your house, get the things that are precious and save them. **But there is no future for this world in this day. It's all going to be destroyed.** The whole earth is going to be transformed, reconfigured. Nothing of the past needs to be taken into the glory of the Kingdom of God. The emphasis here is not on details but on a general attitude. ([Seven Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 4](#))

**Luke 17:32 "Remember Lot's wife.**

**KJV Luke 17:32** Remember Lot's wife.

- 1 Corinthians 10:6-12; Hebrews 10:38,39; 2 Peter 2:18-22
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:31-37 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 4](#) - John MacArthur

#### Related Passages:

Genesis 19:17, 26+ When they (THE 2 ANGELS) had brought them (LOT, WIFE, 2 DAUGHTERS) outside (OF CITY OF SODOM), one said, "**Escape** for your life! **Do not look** behind you, and **do not stay** anywhere in the valley; **escape** to the mountains, or you will be swept away."....**BUT** (A TRAGIC TERM OF CONTRAST - FIGURATIVELY IT MEANS "[ABOUT FACE](#)" AND THAT IS WHAT SHE DID LITERALLY!) his wife, from behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

A PILLAR OF SALT

### SECOND COMING: A WOMAN TO REMEMBER!

**Remember** (keep on remembering - command [present imperative](#) see [need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) **Lot's wife** - Jesus gives this warning as a [present imperative](#). The idea is to keep on recollecting what Lot's wife was specifically instructed to do and how she specifically disobeyed. Her disobedience was the outward manifestation of her inner unbelief (cp Heb 3:18, 19+ where "disobedient" parallels "unbelief"). She came out physically, but her heart was still in Sodom. We should shudder to imagine how many today in America's lax style of "churchianity" have joined the church but never been joined to Jesus (Ro 7:4+). Lot's wife is an example of one attached to material things. She could not resist turning around to see what was happening to her home, and as a consequence lost everything (cp Mk 8:35,36+ Lu 14:33+). The Lord Jesus confirms the historicity of the remarkable Genesis account of Lot's wife and indirectly of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah! God's Word is true in every single detail!

**NET Note** - The warning about Lot's wife is not to look back and long to be where one used to be. The world is being judged, and the person who delays or turns back will be destroyed.

Paul explains that the mistakes and failures of the people in the Old Testament have incredible value to us if we hear and heed the warnings of their mistakes...

Now **these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.** 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY." 8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. 9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. 10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 **Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction,** upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. (1 Cor 10:6-12)



"Lot's Wife's" Pillar at Mt Sodom

**Remember** (recall, bearing in mind) (3421)(**mnemoneuo** from **mimnesko** = to recall to one's mind) means to exercise memory, call something to mind, recollect, to pay attention to something and so to be warned as here in Lk 17:32. It is notable that this Greek verb gives us our English word **mnemonic** which is defined as a device (such as a rhyme or acronym) used to aid recall. It follows that every time we hear of "Lot's wife" we should be warned of the deadly deception of following in her footsteps or more accurately of stopping in her footsteps, so to speak!

**Lot's wife** - Her actions reflected her heart's desire. Do your actions reflect your heart's desire? Is it a desire which is pleasing to the Lord?

Genesis 19:17,26; When they (THE ANGELS) had brought them (LOT, HIS WIFE AND TWO DAUGHTERS) outside, one said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountains, or you will be swept away.(THE WARNING COULD NOT HAVE BEEN ANY CLEARER)" 26 But his wife, from behind him, **looked back**, and she became a pillar of salt ([SEE NOTE](#)).

**Lot's wife** looked back at Sodom and Gomorrah because she loved the world, she loved the things of the world more than she loved God. Jesus warned of the grave danger of a divided heart

All through the Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation, we find a basic principle relating to personal choice, and this principle deals with our "spiritual vision," or where the "eyes of our heart" are directed. There are really only two choices - either "Vertically" toward the Eternally Existing God or "Horizontally," toward the temporal, passing world (SEE DISCUSSION OF ["Vertical Vision"](#)). Clearly **Lot's wife** had chosen the temporal over the eternal and for that she was destroyed in time and will be destroyed forever in eternity. **Isn't life really all about personal choice?** We love to say that we defend the right of everyone to make their personal choice (e.g., a woman's right to abort her unborn child). And so yes, like **Lot's wife**, we all have a choice. And like **Lot's wife** we may even take a few steps out of "Sodom," and toward God, but tragically we turn around to gaze at what our heart truly loves and we find that it will cost us our life, and we will experience eternal punishment, forever separated from God.

**Paul** describes this fateful, eternally significant choice in his second letter to the Thessalonians writing

For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, 8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 These (LIKE LOT'S WIFE, THEY CHOSE THE WORLD) will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, (2 Th 1:6-9)

Jesus describes those like Lot's wife who take a few steps toward God, perhaps praying a prayer to "accept Jesus into their heart" or making a profession that "I am a Christian" (which Barna surveys show upwards to 80% of Americans affirm!) and yet as they move slowly away from "Sodom" they sense the loss and the call to count the cost, and they become like those in the parable of the seed described in Luke 8

6 "And other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture.

7 "And other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it, and choked it out.



13 "And those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.

14 "And the seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

Lot's wife was like the seed on the rocky soil, that took a few steps toward God and the

John warns NT readers of the danger of loving this world and issues a strong command...

**Do not love** ([present imperative with a negative](#) = Don't start this or stop doing it - see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the world nor the things in the world. (NOW JOHN EXPLAINS WHY WE ARE NOT TO LOVE THIS WORLD) If anyone loves ([present tense](#) = as one's habitual mindset - always earthward, never heavenward) the world, the love of the Father is (absolutely) not in him (I.E., HE IS NOT A GENUINE BELIEVER). 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does (PRESENT TENSE = SPEAKS OF GENERAL DIRECTION OF YOUR LIFE, NOT OF PERFECTIO - THAT WILL ONLY BE POSSIBLE IN GLORY!) the will of God lives forever. (1 John 2:15-17<sup>+</sup>)

**Criswell** - Lot's wife is an example of one attached to material things. She could not resist turning around to see what was happening to her home, and as a consequence lost everything (Ge 19:26+).

We see a similar warning passage in the epistle to the Hebrews

BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK ([hupostello](#)), MY SOUL HAS NO (Greek = absolute negation) PLEASURE ([eudokeo](#)) IN HIM. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction ([apoleia](#) = not the loss of being as in the false teaching of [annihilationism](#), but the loss of well being, the loss of purpose for which one was created!...to glorify God and enjoy Him forever!), but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul. (Hebrews 10:38,39-[note](#))

**Comment:** What does "no pleasure" mean? As is usually the case the context gives us the key to the Biblical answer. Hebrews 10:39 says their end is destruction.

**John MacArthur** comments that the story of Lot emphasizes we are to "Leave everything in this world behind and to point out clearly what He means, Jesus says, "**Remember Lot's wife.**" What triggered this statement is probably the "**don't turn back**" (end of Lk 17:31) **Remember Lot's wife!** Remember gives us our word [mnemonic](#), an adjective that means something designed as a device to aid the memory. **Lot's wife** was a story of a rigid salt pillar in the mind of every Jew for centuries. She is the archetypal person who was near deliverance, near salvation by escaping to the mountains but was destroyed because she looked back. She looked back because her heart was tethered to this passing world!

Look at Genesis 19+ because you can't **remember Lot's wife** if you don't know who she is. Lot had settled in Sodom with his wife and his two daughters. It was exceedingly sinful. Ge 18:20+ says "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and **their sin is exceedingly grave,**" so sinful that it needed to be completely obliterated from the earth and there were not even ten righteous people in the whole area (Ge 18:32-33).

Then the two men (GOD SENT TWO ANGELS TO RESCUE LOT) said to Lot, "Whom else have you here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, bring them out of the place; 13 for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it." 14 Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, "Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city." But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting. 15 When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Up, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city." 16 But he hesitated. So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for the compassion of the LORD was upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city. 17 When they had brought them outside, one said, (NOTE THE CLARITY, EVEN THE REPETITION OF GOD'S WARNING - THE COMMAND TO ESCAPE IS MENTIONED TWICE!) "**Escape** (COMMAND) **for your life!** Do not look (THE HEBREW WORD FOR "LOOK" IS NOT A PASSING, CASUAL GLANCE BUT AN INTENSE GAZE) behind you, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountains, or you will be swept away." 18 But Lot said to them, "Oh no, my lords! 19 "Now behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness, which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot **escape** (COMMAND) to the mountains, for the disaster will overtake me and I will die; 20 now behold, this town is near enough to flee to, and it is small. Please, let

me escape there (is it not small?) that my life may be saved." 21 He said to him, "Behold, I grant you this request also, not to overthrow the town of which you have spoken. 22 **"Hurry, escape** (TWO SHARP COMMANDS!) there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there." Therefore the name of the town was called Zoar (MEANS LITTLE). 23 The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar. 24 Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven, 25 and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. 26 **But his wife, from behind him, looked back** (SAME HEBREW WORD AS IN VERSE 17 = NOT A PASSING GLANCE BUT A "PASSIONATE" GAZE, SHE LOOKED BACK "LONGINGLY," YEA, EVEN "LUSTFULLY!"), **and she became a pillar of salt.** (NOTICE THAT GOD GAVE HER A CHANCE, BUT SHE CHOSE TO DIE - SHE, LIKE HER DAUGHTERS LATER, HAD ALLOWED HER THINKING TO BE INFLUENCED BY THE CULTURE OF SODOM. WHAT A WARNING TO ALL PARENTS TODAY!) 27 Now Abraham arose early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before the LORD; 28 and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the valley, and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a furnace. 29 Thus it came about, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived. (Genesis 19:12-29+)

**NET NOTE** - In Ge 19:29+ "remembered," means more than mental recollection. Abraham's request (Ge 18:23-32) was that the LORD not destroy the righteous with the wicked. While the requisite minimum number of righteous people (ten, v32) needed for God to spare the cities was not found, God nevertheless rescued the **righteous** before destroying the wicked. God showed Abraham special consideration because of the covenant relationship He had established with the patriarch (Ge 15:17-18-note). Yet the reader knows that God delivered the **"righteous"** (Lot's designation in 2 Pet 2:7) before destroying their world – which is what he will do again at the end of the age. God's removal of Lot before the judgment is [paradigmatic](#) (of or relating to a typical example). He typically delivers the godly before destroying their world. (**ED**: ANOTHER REASON A PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE IS THE MOST LOGICAL TIMING!)

(MacArthur continues) Lot's wife was destroyed on the brink of safety. She came close but she could not let go of the world. She was that **rocky soil** that springs up for a little while but no true repentance there and it dies under pressure (Lk 8:6, 13+). She was that **thorny soil**, that springs up for a little while, but never bears fruit (Lk 8:7+). The love of the world's riches choke it out (Lk 8:14+). She belonged to Sodom. Her stuff was there. Her heart was there. She looked back longingly and was destroyed with Sodom. She was a Sodomite. Her heart was there because she loved her sin. She couldn't forsake the sins she loved. She "loved the darkness rather than the Light, for (her) deeds were evil" (John 3:19+). She loved iniquity rather than righteousness (**ED**: EXACT OPPOSITE OF JESUS - Heb 1:9+). ([Characteristics of the Coming King. Part 4](#))

**J C Ryle's** comments on **Remember Lot's wife** are worth remembering (pun intended!):

We should observe **what a solemn warning our Lord gives us against unsound profession.** He says to us, in immediate connection with the description of His second advent, **"Remember Lot's wife."** Lot's wife went far in religious profession. She was the wife of a **"righteous man."** (2 Pe 2:7-8) She was connected through him with Abraham, the father of the faithful (Ge 15:6+, Ro 4:11-12+). She fled with her husband from Sodom in the day when he escaped for his life by God's command (cf Ge 19:16+). But Lot's wife was not really like her husband. Though she fled with him, she had left her heart behind her. She willfully disobeyed the strict injunction which the angel had laid upon her. She looked back towards Sodom, and was at once struck dead. She was turned into a pillar of salt, and perished in her sins. **"Remember"** her, says our Lord — **"Remember Lot's wife."**

Lot's wife is meant to be a beacon and a warning to all professing Christians. It may be feared that many will be found like her in the day of Christ's second advent. There are many in the present day who go a certain length in religion. They conform to the outward ways of Christian relatives and friends. They speak the "language of Canaan." They use all the outward ordinances of religion. But all this time their souls are not right in the sight of God. The world is in their hearts, and their hearts are in the world. And by and bye, in the day of sifting, their unsoundness will be exposed to all the world. Their Christianity will prove rotten at the core. The case of Lot's wife will not stand alone.

Let us remember Lot's wife, and resolve to be real in our religion. Let us not profess to serve Christ for no higher motive than to please husbands, or wives, or masters, or ministers. A mere formal religion like this will never save our souls. Let us serve Christ for His own sake. Let us never rest until we have the true grace of

God in our hearts, and have no desire to look back to the world.

We should observe, lastly, in these verses, **what a dreadful separation there will be in the professing Church when Christ comes again**. Our Lord describes this separation by a very striking picture. He says, "In that night there shall be two people in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

The meaning of these expressions is clear and plain. The day of Christ's second advent shall be the day when good and evil, converted and unconverted, shall at length be divided into two distinct bodies. The visible Church shall no longer be a mixed body. The wheat and the tares shall no longer grow side by side. The good fish and the bad shall at length be sorted into two bodies. The angels shall come forth, and gather together the godly, that they may be rewarded; and leave the wicked behind to be punished.

"Converted or unconverted?" will be the only subject of enquiry. It will matter nothing that people have worked together, and slept together, and lived together for many years. They will be dealt with at last according to their religion. Those members of the family who have loved Christ, will be taken up to heaven; and those who have loved the world, will be cast down to hell. Converted and unconverted shall be separated for evermore when Jesus comes again.

Let us lay to heart these things. He that loves his relatives and friends is specially bound to consider them. If those whom he loves are true servants of Christ, let him know that he must cast in his lot with them, if he would not one day be parted from them forever. If those whom he loves are yet dead in trespasses and sins, let him know that he must work and pray for their conversion, lest he should be separated from them by and bye to all eternity. Life is the only time for such work. Life is fast ebbing away from us all. Partings, and separations, and the breaking up of families are at all times painful things. But all the separations that we see now are nothing compared to those which will have been seen when Christ comes again. (Luke 17 Commentary)

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#### QUESTION - [Why was Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt?](#)

**ANSWER** - Genesis 19 tells the story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. [Lot](#), Abraham's nephew, lived in Sodom with his family. His daughters were engaged to local men. Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom, the area where financial and judicial transactions took place, when two angels came into town. Lot invited them to stay with his family. After a rather exciting evening, the angels made sure Lot, his wife, and his two daughters left before God destroyed the city (Genesis 19:13). As they fled, the angels warned them, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountains, or you will be swept away" (Genesis 19:17).

Lot ran, his daughters close behind. "But his wife, from behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt" (Genesis 19:26). She lagged behind. She turned and watched the flaming sulfur fall from the sky, consuming everything she valued. Then it consumed her. The Hebrew for "looked back" means more than to glance over one's shoulder. It means "to regard, to consider, to pay attention to." The Scriptures don't say whether her death was a punishment for valuing her old life so much that she hesitated in obeying, or if it was a simple consequence of her reluctance to leave her life quickly. Either she identified too much with the city—and joined it—or she neglected to fully obey God's warning, and she died.

We're fortunate to receive similar warnings. Ephesians 4:22-24 tells us to take off the old self that is ruled by sin and be renewed, putting on the new self that is in the likeness of God. Similarly, 1 John 5:16 says that willful, deliberate sin can lead to death. Lot's wife wasn't able to accept that. What she chose to value in her heart led her to sin, which led to her death.

The Bible isn't clear whether Lot's wife was covered in the salt that rained down with the brimstone or if her remains were dusted with a coating of salt later. But it is interesting that she is described as a "pillar." The Hebrew for "pillar" refers to a garrison or a deputy, that is, something set to watch over something else. The image of Lot's wife standing watch over the Dead Sea area—where to this day no life can exist—is a poignant reminder to us not to look back or turn back from the profession of faith we have made, but to follow Christ without hesitation and abide in His love (Luke 17:32). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### QUESTION - [What does it mean to "remember Lot's wife" in Luke 17:32?](#)

**ANSWER** - In speaking to His disciples about a coming time of great destruction, Jesus mentioned what happened to Lot's wife and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. "Remember Lot's wife!" He said. "Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it" (Luke 17:32-33).

The story of Lot and his wife is found in Genesis 19. God had determined to destroy [Sodom and Gomorrah](#) for their wickedness (Genesis 18:16-33), and two angels warned Abraham's nephew Lot to evacuate the city so he and his family would not be

destroyed. In Genesis 19 we read, The two [angels in the form of] men said to Lot, ‘Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it’” (Ge 19:12–13+).

At dawn the next day, the angels hurried Lot and his family out of Sodom so they would not be destroyed with the city. When Lot hesitated, “the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them. As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, ‘Flee for your lives! Don’t look back, and don’t stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!’” (Genesis 19:16–17).

As the family fled, “the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah—from the Lord out of the heavens” (Genesis 19:24). But, then, in disobedience to the angel’s command, “Lot’s wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt” (Ge 19:26+).

Lot’s wife lost her life because she “looked back.” This was more than just a glance over the shoulder; it was a look of longing that indicated reluctance to leave or a desire to return. Whatever the case, the point is she was called to desert everything to save her life, but she could not let go, and she paid for it with her life. In Judaism, Lot’s wife became a symbol for a rebellious unbeliever.

Jesus cites this story in Luke 17, as He describes a future event: “It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. On that day no one who is on the housetop, with possessions inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. Remember Lot’s wife! Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it” (Lk 17:28–33).

When “the Son of Man is revealed,” it will be time for people to flee. There will be no time to take anything along. If you see the sign when you are on the roof (a rooftop deck with exterior stairs was a common feature of houses at the time), you should not even take time to go into the house to gather up your possessions. You need to get out and “don’t look back.” Lot’s wife is the example of what will happen if you do. If you try to save your life (that is, your things that your life is made up of), you will lose everything. Leave it all to save your life.

The scenario is similar to a person who wakes up in the middle of the night to find the house in flames. That person might be tempted to run around and gather up valuable items, but the delay might prevent escape—all the things will be lost, as well as the person’s life. It is better to leave it all behind and get out with your life. The principle is clear, but the exact referent is more difficult to discern.

The revelation of the Son of Man is the event in view in Luke 17. Mark 13:14–16 records much the same message without the mention of Lot’s wife. There, the sign is “the abomination that causes desolation” (see also Matthew 24:15–18). Finally, Jesus mentions a similar situation in Luke 21:20–21: “When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city.”

The above passages are open to several different approaches to interpretation, centered on when this will take place. If we are correct that all of these passages describe roughly the same event(s), it would seem that “the day the Son of Man is revealed,” “the abomination that causes desolation,” and “Jerusalem surrounded by armies” all refer to the signal that it is time to flee.

Outside of Luke 17, the warnings to flee are found in the context of the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (see Luke 21:5–7 and Mark 13:1–4). In Matthew 24:1–3, Jesus also deals with the destruction of the temple, except there the disciples also ask specifically about “the sign of your coming and the end of the age.” So, at least some of the prophecy was fulfilled in the first century with the destruction of the temple, but that does not preclude a future, fuller fulfillment at the second coming. The wording in Luke 17, in which Jesus speaks of the revelation of the Son of Man, certainly seems to suggest the second coming (see Colossians 3:4).

Jewish believers in the first century faced persecution from Rome, often at Jewish instigation. As long as Christians were considered a sect of Judaism, they enjoyed religious freedom as Jews. However, as they were denounced by Jewish leaders and no longer considered part of Judaism, the full force of Roman expectations applied to them, including the requirement to affirm the creed “Caesar is Lord” and offer sacrifices to Caesar. If Christians failed to do this, they could be punished, imprisoned, or even killed. As a result, believing Jews faced continual pressure to “go back to the temple.” The [book of Hebrews](#) encourages believing Jews to remain true to Christ and not return to the Old Covenant system of the temple, priests, and sacrifices. Hebrews explains that the Old Covenant has passed.

There may have been some believing Jews in Judea who still had some attachment to the temple. In Luke 17, Jesus warns that there will come a time when they see a symbol of impending judgment, and they will need to get out of the area as quickly as possible. Just as God rained down wrath on Sodom and Gomorrah, He will judge Jerusalem. The coming wrath is no time for divided loyalties. While many believed that God would never allow the temple to be destroyed, Jewish Christians knew that the

usefulness of the temple had passed and its days were numbered. They could stay on in Jerusalem and witness of the resurrected Christ, but when they saw that judgment was about to fall, they knew to get out. [Eusebius](#) in his *Church History* records that they did escape. By abandoning everything and getting out of the city, the Christians not only saved their lives but also gave testimony to the fact that the Old Covenant had been replaced by the New.

A similar sentiment is expressed by Jesus in other contexts, although Lot's wife is not mentioned. Jesus said, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). In context, Jesus is talking about people who want to follow Him but are hindered by their concern for other things. It is not just that they look back, but they have divided loyalties, like Lot's wife.

Jesus also used the statement "whoever wants to save his life shall lose it" in a number of different contexts (Matthew 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33). Regardless of the specifics of the context, following Jesus requires turning our backs on the "life" that this world offers. Attempting to "save your life" is the same as "looking back." Attachment to our "old life" will cause us to lose our lives, and Lot's wife is the illustration and example that we would do well to remember. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**Luke 17:33 "Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it."**

**KJV Luke 17:33** Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it

- Luke 9:24,25; Matthew 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35-37; John 12:25; Revelation 2:10
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:31-37 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 4](#) - John MacArthur

## **SECOND COMING: DISCLOSES ONE'S HEART'S DESIRE**

What has Jesus just commanded? To **remember Lot's wife**. What did she love? The world. What was she seeking to keep? Her life (and worldly lifestyle)! What did she lose? Her life! Jesus explains the spiritual dynamics that were at play in the heart of Lot's wife, which every disciple needs to take care to hear and to heed. In **that day**, the day the Lord Jesus returns, every person who seeks to keep their life will be utterly shocked for they will find themselves forever destroyed ([apollumi](#) = eternal loss of well-being, of purpose, not loss of being, of person). One might say unless one is willing to lose his life, then he will for certain lose his life!

**MacArthur** comments that Lot's wife above "illustrates the person who has come to the edge of salvation but looks back.. They hold on to the world, they hold on to sin, they keep what they want of this life but they will lose it forever in hell. But if you give it up, which is what **lose your life** means, then forever you will gain all that heaven has. If you want the best that God has prepared, then you let go of this world and its sin, you give it all up, you take your life and lose it. It's just exactly what Jesus said in Luke 9:23–25-note, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must (AN OBLIGATION, NECESSITY TO) deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. 24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. 25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?" The same principle repeated (see verses from Mt 10, etc) to hate yourself, hate your mother, hate your father, hate your friends and relatives, even your money and possessions, because none of it means anything to the one who truly sells all to embrace Christ. Escape to the Savior Alone Who can save you from judgment. **So when that day of judgment comes, it will be clear to everybody where hearts are** That's why I say, it will be [revelatory](#). It will reveal the condition of the heart. Have a prepared heart for a time of judgment. [Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 4](#))

**Whoever seeks ([zeteo](#)) to keep ([peripoieomai](#)) his life will lose ([apollumi](#)) it** -- Keep > lose. Lose > keep! These paradoxes are emphasized by the Lord Jesus often in His teaching, so clearly is a truth He wants everyone to hear and heed. Jesus' sobering statement begs the question from every thoughtful reader/hearer -- What am I seeking in life? What am I desiring to possess? What am I striving for in this short span of existence on earth? Everyone who has concern for their eternal destiny needs to give serious, careful attention to these questions. And if you need some motivation, then here is the [mnemonic](#), **Remember Lot's wife!**

**Steven Cole** - In other words, to be so attached to the things of this earth that we want to hang on to them more than we want heaven is to jeopardize our eternal souls. But to let go of all the things that the world values and to live in light of Jesus' coming will result in ultimate and final salvation. It may mean hardship and suffering now, in comparison with those who are living for this life only. Like the rich man in contrast with Lazarus (16:19-31), they may have it good now and you may be worse off because you are



not striving for those things. But when Jesus comes and God's final judgment falls, you will be the one to preserve your life and they will lose theirs. Remember Lot's wife! ([The Present and Future Kingdom](#))

**To keep** (4046) (**peripoieomai** from **peri** = around + **poiéo** = make) literally means to make around oneself and then or gain anything, making it one's own, by paying a price, by performing labor, etc. In this context **peripoieomai** means "to make secure for oneself, save/preserve (for oneself)." (BDAG)

**Friberg** - (1) preserve (for oneself), save (Lk 17:33); (2) gain or acquire (for oneself), obtain (1Ti 3:13); pay the price for, acquire with much effort (Acts 20:28+)

**Seeks** (2212) (**zeteo**) has a range of meaning from look for, search for, investigate, desire to possess, and strive for or aim at. Lot's wife was desiring to hold on to this temporal world and she lost her life eternally. **Zeteo** is used in a good sense in Lk. 12:31 where Jesus tells us to "**seek** His kingdom, (He is referring first to the present, invisible, internal kingdom but also to the future, visible, external kingdom) and these things will be added to you." In Luke 13:24 **zeteo** is used in a negative sense where Jesus calls on men to "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, **will seek** to enter (Lk 13:28 tells us what they are seeking to enter - "the kingdom of God") and will not be able." And so we see that we need to be very careful about what we seek. If we seek first the Kingdom of God, we will not be among those who are seeking to keep their life and who find themselves shut out of the kingdom and then try to seek to enter the kingdom, but it will be as they say "too little, too late!"

Luke uses this verb frequently - Lk. 2:48; Lk. 2:49; Lk. 5:18; Lk. 6:19; Lk. 9:9; Lk. 11:9; Lk. 11:10; Lk. 11:16; Lk. 11:24; Lk. 11:29; Lk. 12:29; Lk. 12:31; Lk. 13:6; Lk. 13:7; Lk. 13:24; Lk. 15:8; Lk. 17:33; Lk. 19:3; Lk. 19:10; Lk. 19:47; Lk. 20:19; Lk. 22:2; Lk. 22:6; Lk. 24:5; Acts 9:11; Acts 10:19; Acts 10:21; Acts 13:8; Acts 13:11; Acts 16:10; Acts 17:5; Acts 17:27; Acts 21:31; Acts 27:30

**To keep** (4046) (**peripoieomai** from **peri** = around + **poiéo** = make) literally means to make around oneself and then or gain anything, making it one's own, by paying a price, by performing labor, etc. In this context **peripoieomai** means "to make secure for oneself, save/preserve (for oneself)." (BDAG)

**Friberg** - (1) preserve (for oneself), save (Lk 17:33); (2) gain or acquire (for oneself), obtain (1Ti 3:13); pay the price for, acquire with much effort (Acts 20:28+)

**Whoever loses** (**apollumi**) **his life will preserve** (**zoogoneo**) **it** - This is the ultimate paradox of life - to live is to die, to die is to live. To live to self is to die to Savior. To die to self is to live to Savior! It makes absolutely no sense to the natural man, for "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised." (1 Cor 2:14) To the natural man Christian's are fools and foolish to believe this truth which to them makes no sense at all. But since it is spiritual truth, it requires spiritual eyes to see, and the eyes of a man's heart have not been opened, they are blind to this truth. But if a man's eyes have been opened (Acts 26:18) so they now can receive spiritual light, they know deep within their heart that dying to self and living unto God is the very essence of a fulfilling life in this world and the one to come. (See [Spiritual Paradox in the Christian Life](#))

The paradoxical truth of dying to gain is so crucial that Jesus repeats it many times in His teaching:

Matthew 10:37+ "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 "He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

Matthew 16:24+ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Mark 8:35-38+ "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? 37 "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Luke 14:25-27+ Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to Me, and **does not hate** his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and **even his own life**, he cannot be My disciple. 27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

Luke 14:33+ "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.

John 12:24+ "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

**Luke 17:34 "I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other will be left.**

**KJV Luke 17:34** I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

- **I tell you** Luke 13:3,5,24; Isaiah 42:9; Matthew 24:25; Mark 13:23; 14:29
- **on that night** Matthew 24:40,41
- **there will be two in one bed** Ps 26:9; 28:3; Jeremiah 45:5; Ezekiel 9:4-6; Malachi 3:16-18; Romans 11:4-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; 2 Peter 2:9
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:31-37 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 4](#) - John MacArthur

## **SECOND COMING: DIVISIVE IN EFFECT**

**I tell you** - This phrase is frequently used in Luke's Gospel, 20 times out of a total of 37 times total.

Lk. 11:8; Lk. 11:51; Lk. 12:5; Lk. 12:27; Lk. 12:51; Lk. 13:3; Lk. 13:5; Lk. 13:24; Lk. 13:27; Lk. 14:24; Lk. 15:7; Lk. 15:10; Lk. 17:34; Lk. 18:8; Lk. 18:14; Lk. 19:26; Lk. 19:40; Lk. 20:8; Lk. 22:37; Lk. 22:67

**On that night there will be two in one bed** - This is interesting for it says Jesus will come **in that day**, but here He says **on that night**.

**Wiersbe** - The fact that it is night in Luke 17:34 but day in Luke 17:35–36 indicates that the whole world will be involved in the return of Jesus Christ in glory. (Borrow [Be courageous](#) Luke 14-24)

**Morris** feels that "When the Lord comes, it will be at night when men are in bed. But it will also be early morn when women are grinding meal (Luke 17:35) and mid-day when men are working in the field (Luke 17:36). This is possible since the earth is round and rotating daily on its axis." (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**MacArthur** comments of two in one bed, presumably picturing a husband and wife - "It is the most divisive thing because you live in two completely different worlds with two completely different loves and two completely different motivations. That's true now. Some of you experience that every day of your life because you're alienated from your own children, you're alienated from your own spouse, you're alienated from your own parents, you're alienated from the friends and the people you associate with and you're terminally alienated, and eternally alienated because you are in Christ and they are not. You possess eternal life and they do not. And the price you've had to pay for your commitment to Christ is the loss of that intimacy to a very significant and serious degree."

**One will be taken and the other will be left** - In short the return of Jesus will be divisive. We have already seen in the comparison to the days of Noah and Lot that the day of divine judgment brings division and eternal separation. So too, the day of divine judgment associated with the return of Jesus will bring a division and the logical conclusion is that the division will be between believers and non-believers. The question of course is who is **taken** and who is **left**. There is considerable disagreement among commentators as to who constitutes each group, and I will give my measured opinion. However, the most important point is not so much the identity of the taken and the left but the fact that Jesus' return will bring about a moment of division in relationships which will last for eternity. The point is that there will be an unbridgeable separation, between spouses, parents and children, friends, casual acquaintances, etc. All mankind will be radically impacted by the fact that some are taken and some are left. Regardless of their specific identities, it is crystal clear that there will be a point of separation, which for some will yield eternal good and for others will yield eternal bad. That's the main point of Jesus' words. And frankly, when one meditates on that truth as a believer, our hearts should be deeply stirred to desire to be passionate and persistent (in the Spirit) to share the Gospel clearly with EVERYONE God gives us even a small opportunity "to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence." (1 Peter 3:15). Life is short. Eternity is long. This moment of division is permanently fixed.

**THOUGHT** - Father, fill us with a **sense of urgency** and with the Holy Spirit so that we might speak the word of God with boldness and proclaim the King of the Kingdom of God while today is still called today and before the night comes when no man can work. In Jesus' mighty Name. Amen.(Acts 4:31, Heb 3:13a, John 9:4)

Annie Walker, an eighteen-year-old girl, saw the urgency of the hour in 1854. After reading the Lord's words in John 9:4, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work," she quickly penned the well-known hymn, "Work for the Night is Coming." The night of this world is soon approaching. Christian friend, be like Ezekiel whom God set as a watchman in his day: hear the Word of God, and warn the people to turn back to God (Ezek. 33:6-8, 9)! Play this great hymn, [Work For the Night is Coming](#) asking God to may it the passion of your heart in these last days. Amen

Work, for the night is coming,  
Work thro' the morning hours;  
Work while the dew is sparkling,  
Work 'mid springing flow'rs.  
Work when the day grows brighter,  
Under the glowing sun;  
Work, for the night is coming,  
When man's work is done.

Work for the night is coming,  
Work thro' the sunny noon;  
Fill brightest hours with labor--  
Rest comes sure and soon.  
Give every flying minute  
Something to keep in store;  
Work, for the night is coming,  
When man works no more.

Work for the night is coming,  
Under the sunset skies:  
While their bright tints are glowing,  
Work, for daylight flies.  
Work till the last beam fadeth,  
Fadeth to shine no more;  
Work, while the night is dark'ning,  
When man's work is o'er.

Now let's analyze the **taken** and the **left** in more detail. If we look at the examples of Noah and Lot, it seems that the ones that were **left** on earth were those who were saved from destruction. On the other hand, it seems the ones that were destroyed were in effect **taken** away from earth. If we compare Matthew's use below of the same verb **fortaken** ([paralambano](#)), it would seem to support the premise that the one **taken** is destroyed and the one **left** is safe.

**Paralambano** is used twice in a this parallel passage in Matthew which is also in the context of the Second Coming of Jesus (cf Mt 24:30) where Jesus says

"For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and they did not understand until the flood came and **took them all away** (however note that they verb here is [airo](#), not [paralambano](#)); so will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 "Then there shall be two men in the field; one **will be taken** ([paralambano](#)), and one will be left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill; one **will be taken** ([paralambano](#)), and one will be left." (Mt 24:38-41)

The ones destroyed by the flood in verse 39 are described as being taken away by the flood. It would follow logically that even though the verbs **took** and **taken** are not identical, certainly the actions are identical. And so in the Matthew version the most logical conclusion is that in Mt 24:40-41 the ones that are taken (from the field, from the grinding mill) will be taken to judgment and death. The ones left will be left to enter the blessings of the millennial kingdom. Now this still does not resolve who is taken and who is left in the Luke passage. I will mention some other commentator's interpretations below, but perhaps the safest approach is to not be dogmatic.

**NET Note** - There is debate among commentators and scholars over the phrase one will be taken and the other left about whether one is taken for judgment or for salvation. If the imagery is patterned after the rescue of Noah from the flood and Lot from Sodom, as some suggest, the ones taken are the saved (as Noah and Lot were) and those left behind are judged. The imagery, however, is not directly tied to the identification of the two groups. Its primary purpose in context is to picture the sudden, surprising separation of the righteous and the judged (i.e., condemned) at the return of the Son of Man.

**Taken** (3880) ([paralambano](#) from **para** = beside + **lambano** = appropriate, receive) means to receive from another, to receive alongside or to take to oneself (into close association). There are two basic ideas - to take or to receive and in this context the sense is clearly taken. In John 14:3 where Jesus refers to the Rapture **paralambano** means to take with one in order to carry away, but could also convey a sense close fellowship and agreement associated with the receiving to Himself.

This division at the Second Coming should not be a surprise, because even His first coming brought division. Jesus clearly stated that one of the effects of His first coming would be division, especially notable in families...

"Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two, and two against three. "They will be divided, father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against mother; mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." (Luke 12:51-53-note)

As alluded to in the previous verse it is clear that there is not a consensus on who is taken and who is left. Some sources like the ESV Study Bible say that the one taken means "One is caught up to be with Christ, while the other is left."

On the other hand **John MacArthur** comments "The question arises as to what it means to be **taken** and **left**. Some have related this to the rapture, but a comparison with Matthew 24:37-41 and its illustration of God taking people away in the flood makes it clear this is judgment. In both cases then, the one **taken** is destroyed in judgment, while the one left behind, obviously a true believer in Jesus Christ, escapes judgment to enter the kingdom. The Lord illustrated this same principle in the parable of the wheat and tares (Matt. 13:24-30) and the analogy of the sheep and goat judgment (Matt. 25:31-46). (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Luke 11-17)

**Henry Morris on the other will be left** - The return of the Lord, like His first coming, will entail many events stretched over a period of time. It will be initiated by the sudden translation of believers out of the unbelieving world, as described more fully in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:10. Thus the Lord frequently exhorted His disciples (including us) always to be watchful and ready for His coming (Luke 21:36), an admonition which would be pointless under any other interpretation of such Scriptures. (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Steven Cole** - It is not clear whether the one taken is taken away to judgment, while the other is left to enter the kingdom, or vice versa. In light of the context, where Noah, Lot, the one on the housetop, and the one in the field all escape judgment by fleeing, whereas those left behind die and are prey for vultures (Lk 17:37), probably those taken go to safety whereas those left are overtaken by God's judgment. But don't get hung up debating the details and miss the crucial point. When Jesus suddenly returns, all humanity will be divided into two groups. Those who have lived for themselves with no regard for God and without submitting themselves to His kingdom will fall under His judgment and be left as carcasses for the vultures. The other group are those who have submitted their lives to King Jesus before He comes. They are not seeking to live for this life only, accumulating all the junk that the world lives for. They have willingly given up their lives for the sake of Jesus' kingdom. Their focus is on their Lord and His soon coming. They will escape His judgment. Note that being close to someone who escapes is not good enough. You must escape God's wrath personally! ([The Present and Future Kingdom](#))

**Luke 17:35** "There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken and the other will be left.

**KJV Luke 17:35** Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

- **There will be two women grinding at the same place** Exodus 11:5; Judges 16:21
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:31-37 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 4](#) - John MacArthur

## **SECOND COMING BRINGS SURE SEPARATION**

**There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken and the other will be left**

**Taken** (3880) See preceding discussion of [paralambano](#)

**Luke 17:36** ["Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other will be left."]

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This verse is wanting in most of the most reliable Greek copies of this gospel. Almost certainly it was added by a scribe either from memory or by copying it from the statement in Mt 24:40 where it was present in the Greek manuscripts.

**MacArthur** - This verse appears in Matthew 24:40, it is in all the manuscripts, the ancient manuscripts in Matthew 24:40, it is not in the older manuscripts in Luke, it got imported, we understand that, that's why it's put in brackets here. Somebody, some scribe along the way, maybe writing it down by memory, threw the Matthew line in here in addition to what was in the original Lucan text. But it is true what it says in verse 36, is exactly what it says in Matthew 24:40, it just doesn't belong here.

**Luke 17:37 And answering they said to Him, "Where, Lord?" And He said to them, "Where the body is, there also the vultures will be gathered."**

**KJV Luke 17:37** And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

- **Where the body is, there also the vultures will be gathered** Job 39:29,30; Daniel 9:26,27; Amos 9:1-4; Zechariah 13:8,9; 14:2; Matthew 24:28; 1 Thessalonians 2:16; Revelation 19:17,18
- Luke 17 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom](#) - Steven Cole
- [Luke 17:31-37 Characteristics of the Coming King, Part 4](#) - John MacArthur

## **SECOND COMING: BRING JUDGMENT AND DEATH**

**And answering they said to Him, "Where, Lord?"** - Where what? He has just stated **taken...left** twice, so some writers think their question might be taken **where**? Others propose their question might refer to **where** would this separation, this judgment take place? Still others think the question is more general and refers to **where** would His return take place?

**Steven Cole** - In light of Jesus' answer, they probably were asking where the judgment would take place. Jesus' answer is also hard to understand and there are a variety of interpretations. It could mean that just as vultures gather on dead bodies, so, "Where the spiritually dead are found, there inevitably will there be judgment" (Leon Morris, Luke [IVP/Eerdmans], p. 262). Or, the sense could be that when judgment comes, it will be obvious, just as the location of a corpse is obvious by the presence of vultures. Or, it could mean more, that judgment not only will be obvious, but also universal and permanent (Darrell Bock, Luke [Baker], 2:1440 lists these last two views, along with five others; he leans to the last view). Once judgment comes, it will be final. Thus Jesus is saying, "Don't worry about where the judgment will occur, because once it comes, it will be too late and all will see it in its horrific finality" (adapted from Bock, *ibid.*). The overall point that Jesus is making in Lk 17:24-37 is that His coming will be sudden and therefore we must be prepared in advance. To go on about life, oblivious to God's present kingdom and with no concern for His future kingdom is to expose yourself to great danger. Each person must submit to Jesus as King now and live in light of His soon and certain coming. Only then will it not take you by surprise. ([The Present and Future Kingdom](#))

**MacArthur** writes "Unable to grasp the scope of the judgment Jesus described, the disciples said to Him, **Where, Lord?**" Failing to comprehend that the Lord's coming would trigger a worldwide judgment, they wanted to know the specific location of this event."

**Leon Morris** - Jesus' hearers want to know where all this is to take place, but he does not answer directly. He seems to be citing a proverb setting out the truth that it is the dead body that attracts the vultures (so, as mg., rather than eagles; the Greek word could mean either, but eagles do not eat carrion nor congregate in flocks). Where the spiritually dead are found, there inevitably will there be judgment. ([The Gospel According to St. Luke: An Introduction and Commentary](#) - borrow)

**And He said to them, "Where the body is, there also the vultures will be gathered-** One knows where there is dead flesh by observing vultures circling overhead. They are visible from a distance. , so the return of the Son of Man will be clear to the whole world.

**MacArthur** explains the **vultures** - Vultures are scavengers, and will feed on the corpses of those killed in the judgments associated with the second coming. Wherever in the world the bodies of the unregenerate lie and the vultures gather will be where Christ has been in judgment. Those who fail to heed the warnings of imminent judgment and reject the Son of Man will be caught in that judgment and will not enter the millennial or the eternal kingdom.



**Morris** - These vultures, will be gathering together "unto the supper of the great God" (Revelation 19:17) to eat "the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great" (Revelation 19:18). This will be the final event of the great tribulation when the rebels of the earth are all slain by Christ at Armageddon and "all the fowls were filled with their flesh" (Revelation 19:21). (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Criswell** - Vultures gather wherever the corpse is, and God's judgment will strike wherever the situation deserves it.

**Ryrie** - Where will the ones taken be taken? Where vultures will feed on their corpses, a reference to the carnage and judgment of Armageddon (Rev. 19:17-19). The Lord's response negates the idea that Lk 17:34-35 refer to the church's being "taken" to heaven at the end of the Tribulation. These people are taken to Armageddon and death.

## The Theocratic Kingdom George Peters

**Prop. 110. The passage most relied on to prove the Church-Kingdom theory utterly disproves it. ([Link to original online article](#))**

Desirous to call especial attention to this passage of Scripture, it is reserved for a separate Proposition. In a careful reading and study of the Church-Kingdom theory, it will be found the most frequently quoted, and adduced as an authority, from Origen down to recent writers as Dr. McCosh, and including a host. In view of the learning, ability, and high standing of those who thus employ it, this Scripture (viz., Luke 17:21) deserves marked attention.

### Observation 1.

Before discussing the passage itself we may briefly advert to the manner in which it is employed. It is amazing that, notwithstanding the just criticisms of able commentators, **the most prominent men will continue to quote it in support of a spiritual Kingdom without the least attempt to show how it can be consistently and logically thus applied.** They use it as if no difficulties of any kind were attached to it, and as if it did not prove too much for their own theory. To give a recent example: Dr. McCosh in replying to Renan (Christ. and Posit., p. 245) adduces the passage to prove that "the Kingdom was to be a reign of God in men's hearts" without seeing that if such is its meaning then the wicked Pharisees had already this Kingdom "within" them, for the words were directly addressed to them. When men of acknowledged ability will quote Scripture so loosely it is saddening to the heart, and causes but little hope that many will duly weigh and examine the passage. It is true some allowance must be made for the manner in which such an interpretation is entrenched in the Church itself, and thus becomes unless particular attention is directed to it, part of its theological equipments. Thus, e.g. Dr. Woodhouse (Transl. of Apoc.) lays down as a canon of interpretation that the Kingdom predicted in Revelation is a spiritual Kingdom and to prove it quotes, italicizing it, "the Kingdom of God, says our Lord, is within you, Luke 17:21, " which canon is endorsed and adopted by Horne (Introd., vol. 2, p. 383). Thus it is erected even as a foundation upon which to build an interpretation. Neander is more guarded, translating (Life of Christ, s. 213) "Behold the Kingdom of God is among you," and in a footnote opposes the rendering "within you" as inconsistent because it "would not suit the persons addressed, for they were as yet strangers to the Kingdom of God," etc. But bound by his theory to find the spiritual Kingdom he apprehends it in the preceding phrase, which he renders "the Kingdom of God cometh not with outward show (cannot be outwardly seen by human eyes), and in a note adds: "The antithesis is, that it reveals itself invisibly, so as to be seen only by the eye of faith." He afterward forgets and contradicts his own definition of this Kingdom, making it in the course of development a real, outward, visible world-dominion. Many such illustrations can be given, found in commentaries, etc., which find here a spiritual Kingdom in one or the other of these sentences, and then make this same inward, invisible Kingdom—a Kingdom only seen by the eye of faith—transform itself somehow into a visible outward Kingdom. This singular transformation notion, so hostile to what they call "a higher spiritual conception," is evidence that there must be something faulty in the theory itself. The reader need scarcely be reminded that this passage, with the interpretation that it denotes "God's reign in the heart," is a favorite one with Spiritualists, etc., to confirm spirit revelations, claims to inspiration, etc. Various sects have built largely on it as indicating special inward light, knowledge, authority, etc.

The interpretation given by believers is well adapted to the use made of it by unbelievers. Thus e.g. Renan (Life of Christ, p. 106) employs it in the interest of humanitarianism as "a true Kingdom of God which each one bears in his heart"; it is "the universal Fatherhood of God," etc., but remarks that later in the life of Jesus it took more of a Jewish complexion which was connected with "a speedy renewal of the world." Bob. Dale Owen (The Deb. Land) employs it as Dr. McCosh and others, to denote a Kingdom in the heart, or "the divine, indwelling spirit of truth," or a kind of ethical, spiritual development. This is the old mistake of confounding the

Divine Sovereignty with the covenanted Theocracy, which e.g. Jerome (quoted by Neander, *Christian Life*, p. 241) expounds, in "From Jerusalem and from Britain the Kingdom of heaven is equally open to you, for the Kingdom of God is within you." Sermons in every variety not only reproduce Jerome's statement but (as Dr. Lowrey and others) actually apply the Millennial predictions, en masse, to this Kingdom in the heart, as e.g. illustrated thus: "When we read that the wilderness and the desert shall be made glad we must understand this to refer to the wilderness and desert places of our own hearts." Writers, whose earnest piety must be admired, thus confound the Divine Sovereignty, God's universal rule, with the Covenanted Kingdom (comp. Props. 79–90), and chiefly base their conclusions upon this passage misinterpreted, as illustrated e.g. in Flavel's *Fountain of Life*. One distinguishing feature in this class of writers is, that without any regard to the context of passages, or their reference to dispensation or time, they are all equally quoted as applicable. Others (as e.g. a writer in *Proph. Times*, vol. 11, p. 156) have (1) "the reign of God over the heart," (2) God's reign in and over the Church. (3) and a Kingdom "to come—something future." But this is only a reiteration of the old misapprehension, a confounding of things that materially differ, a mistaking the means for the end intended, a substituting of sovereignty for the Kingdom covenanted to the Son of man, and an ignoring of express Covenant promises and the strictly logical facts connected with the Kingdom. It is calculated to prevent a proper conception of the Kingdom covenanted to David's Son. Farrar (*Life of Christ*, vol. 2, p. 137) takes the common view, and says that "even they (the disciples) did not fully realize that the Kingdom had already come," and that they looked forward to some glorious future for its arrival. We only now say that the preachers of a Kingdom, specially appointed and sent forth by Jesus, were far better qualified (comp. Props. 43, 44, etc.) to judge in this matter, and form an estimate of the Kingdom than men are at this late day. Of course, Farrar's view ignores the abounding passages relating to the postponement (Props. 58, 66, 67, 68, etc.). Even so excellent a writer as Christlieb (*Mod. Doubt*, p. 416) falls into the error of quoting this passage to sustain the notion of an existing Kingdom "within man," and adds, "and yet this opinion gains ground." Alas! this is but too true that it is gaining ground, rooting out the early Church belief, and preparing both the Church and the world for the predicted state of unbelief on this very subject. This heart-Kingdom theory put in the place of the covenanted Kingdom cannot be sustained by the Covenants, by the predictions, by the bestowal of the Kingdom to David's Son, by the postponement, by the time when it is to be inaugurated, by the means employed at its establishment, etc. It is simply an unwarranted substitution of something, which has always existed (Prop. 84) for a specifically covenanted theocracy pertaining to David's Son. Beecher (*Ch. Union*, Jan. 15th, 1879) gives this increasing belief as follows: "I (Jesus) came to establish a Kingdom that consists in man's dispositions, and not in an outward and visible Kingdom." This passage is a favorite with all the mystical and spiritualistic theories, making the Kingdom to be "the predominance in the soul of man of right dispositions," etc. Entire works, as e.g. *The Inner Kingdom*, are based on a wrong inference taken for granted, viz., "The Kingdom of heaven, Christ said is within us; it is not a physical state; it is a condition of the soul." The Swedenborgian (*Christ is Coming*; but how? p. 14) is more consistent when he spiritualizes not merely a part but the whole, and makes the Lord Jesus' Coming into the heart to raise up this Kingdom, His Second Coming. Alas!

## Observation 2

The passage, Luke 17:20–21, must be taken in its entire connection.

(1) **"And when He was demanded of the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God should come."** The question when the Kingdom should come determines the answer. And we may well ask the question whether Jesus will give that information to the Pharisees which He uniformly denied to His own disciples during His ministry (Mark 13:32) and even after His resurrection (Acts 1:7). Would He give that (i.e. exact time) to His enemies which He withheld from His friends?

(2) **"He answered them and said, the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation."** Perhaps no word has received such singular treatment as the word "observation" here; its primary, distinctive meaning is discarded and a meaning given to it which Judge Jones (*Essays on the Com. of the Kingdom of God*, p. 51) justly remarks "cannot be extracted from it," and as a further proof of it the reader may be challenged to produce another place, either in sacred or secular literature, where any critic has attempted to force any one of these meanings (i.e. outward show, pomp, splendor, etc.) either upon the word 'parateresis' or 'observatio'. Discarding then all those far-fetched secondary engrafted meanings, and leaving even the highly ingenious (perhaps correct) and critical interpretation of Judge Jones, we are willing to accept of the plain meaning of the word as given by critics, viz., denoting (Olshausen) "the act of perceiving or of observing," (Kypke) "scrupulous attention or observation," etc. Thus then, the Kingdom of God cometh, not as something whose approach may be attentively perceived, observed, considered, i.e. like that of a visible object gradually or even swiftly approaching. It will not come indicating its coming by sending forth any observable signs. This is the simple meaning and it corresponds with the general tenor of the word. This Kingdom is linked, as we have shown, with the Second Advent;

“the appearing and the Kingdom” (as in the following verses) are united, II Timothy 4:1. No one will be able to observe its coming, for it comes as the Advent itself, suddenly, unexpectedly, like a thief, illustrated in the parable of the Ten Virgins and by its comparison with the lightning and the days of Noah. So concealed is its approach that it becomes “a snare” to the world, and even to the Church; for its coming is dependent on the fulfillment of “the times of the Gentiles,” the completion of a certain number of the elect, the Advent of Christ Himself, which things are not observable to man, being known only to God. There is nothing in the Kingdom itself to indicate the time of its establishment.

(3) **“Neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there!”** Not being observable for the reasons just assigned no one is able to direct attention to it in the manner indicated.

(4) **“For, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.”** Surely He did not mean that the Pharisees who addressed Him and to whom He spoke, had the Kingdom within them individually, personally. The phrase “within you” is susceptible of an easy and consistent solution. Let the reader consider the Propositions in which we showed conclusively that this Kingdom is covenanted to the Jewish nation; that it is an elect nation; that this Kingdom belonged so exclusively to them that the public ministry of John, Jesus and the disciples was confined (Prop. 54) to that nation; that the Kingdom was tendered to it; that on its refusal (through its representative men) to repent, the Kingdom is postponed and the people who are to receive it as an inheritance with Christ are grafted into that elect nation, etc., and all these considerations show at once how this Kingdom was “within” them. It was truly “within” the nation, it being the elect nation. The persons addressed were part of the nation and chief men of it, and Christ, in strict accordance with covenant relationship and fact, told those very unbelievers, that in view of the tender of this Kingdom to the people of the nation, and of its being preached within the nation, and of its being identified with the nation in the throne and Kingdom of David, this Kingdom is within them. It is connected with them, and within their reach on condition of repentance. It is also equivalent to the expression in Luke 11:20, “the Kingdom of God is come upon you,” or Matthew 12:28, “come unto you,” i.e. has attained unto you or pertains to you. The word “within” receives its force from the restriction thrown around the Kingdom by the covenant relationship of the nation, and therefore it has or it is, come “upon” them, “among” them, “within” them, as it could not at that time come to any other nation or people. This is evidenced from the fact that this very Kingdom thus come within the nation is taken from it and given to another engrafted people. If it did not in a high and peculiar sense belong to the nation, it could not be taken from it. Hence the “within you” addressed to these unbelieving Jews is most expressive of their covenanted relationship and the glorious privileges that they as a nation enjoyed. Restricted as it was to that nation, the opportunity was presented of a blessed change, but instead of repentance and faith and a consequent establishment of the Kingdom, a sad history of wickedness intervened.

(5) **If the context following is noticed it confirms our interpretation.** He now addresses the disciples: “the days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it” (Luke 17:22). This, in reply to the question when the Kingdom shall come, indicates what we have already proven, the indefinite postponement of the Kingdom; for the line of Christ’s remarks makes the decided impression that the Kingdom will not soon be established, owing to His departure, and that the time of His return and its manifestation is concealed. None of the disciples then living shall see and enjoy it during their lives; and, comparing John 17:11–13; Matthew 9:15, etc., these days of absence extend down to our own time, and will only end when the day of the Lord Jesus (Philippians 1:6; I Corinthians 1:5, 8; II Corinthians 1:14; I Thessalonians 5:2, etc.) shall be revealed. In Luke 17:23 He cautions against deceivers who shall pretend to found this Kingdom, which again intimates that it will not come very soon. In reply to the question when, He, taking the fundamental fact that the Kingdom itself is dependent on His appearing, directs attention to the sudden and unmistakable (Luke 17:24) Coming of the King, of the Son of man “in His day.” And (Luke 17:25) directly shows that the Kingdom cannot soon appear, because of His suffering and rejection by that generation. Then He points out the condition of the world at the period of His Advent, that it will be a season of forgetfulness, unbelief, etc., as in the days of Noah and Lot. And yet at such a period, when men almost generally shall discard the notion of the imminency of His coming and the setting up of His Kingdom, this question of the Pharisees shall be realized, for “even thus will it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.” This is followed up by a parable representing a period of trial as intervening, that although such trials were before them men should pray and not faint, because although God “bear long with them” (expressive of delay) He shall finally deliver them, concluding with the deeply impressive question (alas, so abundantly verified in this day), “Nevertheless, when Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” Jews and Gentiles with here and there an exception, discard all faith in this personal Coming of the Son of man, and the Kingdom covenanted to Him and identified with that Coming. The delay is to them ample evidence that it never will be witnessed. Now in the direct answer to the Pharisees, and the added remarks to the disciples, together with the corroborating state of the Church and world, we have reiterated, what has already been proven, that the Kingdom was nigh to the Jewish nation, that, owing to their sinfulness, it was not established but is postponed to an indefinite period in the future, viz., “to the day when the Son of man is revealed” (comp. Props. 56–68).

### Observation 3

Because of the free use made of this passage, a few more remarks on the meaning of “observation” are in place. Coming to this Scripture with a preconceived notion of a Kingdom spiritual and invisible in this dispensation, the multitude engraft on the original word such expressions as “outward show,” “splendor,” “pomp,” “outward display,” “external display of majesty,” etc., which do not

legitimately belong to the word translated “observation,” but are given to it, to suit a theory, on the ground that such things are observed! As Judge Jones (Philo-Basilicus, Essays) has at length shown, nowhere else is it even attempted to render such a meaning. Commentators who employ this secondary sense (as e.g. Bloomfield, Olshausen, etc.) frankly admit that this secondary sense only becomes a conjectural one, because they cannot find another example to verify it. Surely this in itself should be already sufficient reason for the student to regard the secondary sense with suspicion, but we have two additional ones to add. (1) This secondary sense is not true even of the Church. The Church comes with observation, as e.g. on the day of Pentecost. It was established with “outward show” and is perpetuated with the same, having a preached Word, ministers, officers, external ordinances, etc., and the saints are to be a light, a witness of the truth to the world. The faithful body of believers is to manifest itself as a testimony to all, and, of course, this cannot be done unless they can be observed, etc. (2) This secondary sense is not correct concerning the Kingdom of Christ. Let the reader notice what the Covenant demands, what the prophets predict, respecting this Kingdom. Is it not to come with such “outward show,” such “splendor” and “external majesty,” that it shall arrest the attention of, and be witnessed by, all living? Is it not to occupy the place of other kingdoms and to be exalted to the sovereignty of the world? Multitudes of passages teach this; and the least consideration of the predicted glory of the Kingdom, its universality, the restoration of the Jews connected with it, the worship of nations, etc., will at once show that, when it arrives, it will be the great and absorbing object of “observation.” Indeed so evident is this, that we find admissions on all sides conceding it, even although opposed to a previous interpretation of the first part of the passage. Thus, e.g. Schmidt (Bib. Theol. of the N.T., p. 246), after spiritualizing this Kingdom, admits that “the Lord also depicts in Luke 17:24 this same Kingdom as appearing visibly.” Olshausen (Com. loci) advocating the spirituality of the Kingdom in the reply to the Pharisees also claims that in the same chapter it is alluded to as external, external in its perfection. Having already pointed out the inconsistency of this development theory of a claimed higher (spiritual) position to a lower one, it is only necessary to add that all such admissions prove the correctness of our interpretation of the chapter, and the incoherency of their own theory.

Van Oosterzee ([Lange's Com. Luke, p. 268](#)) rejects the idea that this is to be pressed to exclude the visibility of the Kingdom. While we cannot receive his explanation entire (because contradictory), yet we endorse this utterance:

“Not seldom has the saying, that ‘the Kingdom of God comes not with observation,’ been misused and exaggerated, in the sense that this Kingdom will never on earth display itself in a glorious form worthy of itself. No; the Kingdom of God comes not with observation, but when it has once come, we shall nevertheless be well able to say: Lo here!”

But he rejects (p. 266) the view of Chrysostom, Luther, etc., that “within you” means “in your hearts,” and gives his reasons for preferring the translation “in the midst of you.” The fact is, that the elect condition of the nation necessitating the offer of the Kingdom—bringing it nigh to it—is too much overlooked, and that the relationship of these “children of the Kingdom” to the tender offers the most ample and satisfactory explanation. Spiritualize it, and then ask whether such spiritualisms can explain either the language of the prophets as to its world-dominion, or what Kingdom was really taken from the Jews.

#### Observation 4

The meaning that so many deduce from the expression “within you,” is not only opposed by ourselves but finds opponents among many who have no sympathy with our doctrine, and who are in doctrinal position with the Church-Kingdom party. “Advocating a spiritual Kingdom, yet they cannot find it a consistent measure to take the phrase “within you” as indicative of God’s reign in the heart,” etc., for, as they tell us, this would prove too much of the unbelieving party addressed. Hence Neander takes the position (see Obs. 1, above) that it ought to be rendered “among you.” Olshausen informs us that Paulus, Fleck, Borneman, De Wette explain it, “among you.” The marg. reading also gives “among you.” Bloomfield (loci) gives “among you.” Barnes (Com. loci) gives both “within” and “among you.” On the other hand Dr. Campbell, Dr. Jones, and many others insist on retaining “within you.” So far as the sense of the passage is concerned, either one or the other would suffice, although our preference is for the latter. Again, in the efforts to avoid the prevailing application of the “within you,” some, as Dr. Neander, assert that “the Kingdom of God was manifested in his own appearance,” and, as Prof. Whiting explains it, “the King is among you.” So also Dr. Thomas and the Christadelphians generally. Whatever truth (Proposition 56) there may be in King and Kingdom being convertible, yet the peculiarity of the expression embracing a word that legitimately means “within,” and the use of the previous word “observation” forbids the application of this to the person of Jesus Christ, for then He would be “within” those unbelievers and He could not be observed. Besides this, such an explanation is forced, being derived from the third one given by Cornelius a Lapide, and which was based on the Divine Sovereignty of God; while the Kingship of Christ, in view of the foreseen rejection, is held in abeyance, being founded on His covenanted humanity and His relationship to God, after the performance of an allotted mission (Propositions 81–90). The explanation given under Obs. 2 is in correspondence with and unites the statements of the Old and New Testaments, and accurately accords with the then existing status of the Jewish nation.

## Observation 5

This Kingdom “within you” could not be the Christian Church, for that was afterward instituted and it was not anything that the Pharisees were in personal actual enjoyment of, and to apply it either to the person of Christ or to a spiritual reign is to bring it into conflict with covenanted expectations and the preaching of John the Baptist, Jesus, and the disciples (Propositions. 19–23 and 38–49).

Hence, even Bloomfield (loci) says, that to make this phrase significant of “the internal and spiritual principle” “is forbidden by the context.” How he can reconcile his own view with such an admission is something that we cannot understand. Enemies and friends concede to us all that we require.

## Observation 6

While the approach of the Kingdom itself is not discoverable by any observation, being dependent on the secret knowledge of God Himself as to the time and to the completion of the number of the elect, yet this does not forbid a certain approximative knowledge concerning the period of its approach. While not in itself giving forth any visible signs of its Coming, yet the Divine Spirit has given us other signs, other events as a kind of guide by which we may know, more or less, the nearness of its Coming. Jesus Himself enumerates a lengthy series of events, and emphatically adds, Luke 21:31; “So likewise, ye when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” Having already used this passage in sustaining the postponement of the Kingdom, it is only necessary to say that neither the Church, visible or invisible, nor “God’s reign in the heart,” could be denoted, since “these things” specified are running their course down to the present day. Still attention is directed to “these things” to urge us to watchfulness and anticipation of the Coming of the Kingdom undiscoverable by any outward, visible signs. Even the believing, owing to this lack of external observation of the Kingdom, are represented as in danger of having its approach coming upon them most unexpectedly, while the world, rejecting those merciful and gracious predictions, is buried in slumber and caught in “a snare,” or “net.” But few, wholly dependent on faith and not on the Kingdom itself presenting preliminary external signs for observation, will accept of the prophecies pertaining to this matter and be looking for, watching for, and awaiting with hope the Kingdom. These signs, not of the Kingdom itself but of things existing when it is to come, will be enumerated under another Proposition (comp. Props. 173 and 174).

We may in conclusion quote several writers who reject the prevailing interpretation. Rev. H. Dana Ward, in an interesting article, “The Inhabited Earth Shortly to Come” (Proph. Times, vol. 12, p. 37), resists the notion that the Church is the visible Kingdom of the Messiah, and among other texts examines Luke 17: 21–26. He justly repudiates a Kingdom existing in the Pharisees, and also “among you” (i.e. in the person of the King then present), for the former would honor the Pharisees above His disciples, and the latter is opposed by the context following and the references to this Kingdom being still future. He makes the “observation” to be “outward watching,” and the “within you” to be an inward looking for it and preparation for it. This, however, is to lose the force of “within” pertaining—not to believers but—to the Jewish nation, viz., the Kingdom actually tendered to them in view of the elect position occupied. We thus preserve its depth of meaning, so pregnant with tremendous results. Craven (Lange’s Rev., p. 67) points out that the question and answer are both in the present tense, the Pharisees asking: “When cometh the Kingdom of God?” and adds: “The question and the answer are but illustrations of that law proper to all languages, but preeminently to the Greek, by which a certain future may be represented by a verb in the present; illustrations may be found, Matthew 26:2; I Corinthians 15:42–44 (see Jelf, Winer, Kuhner, and grammarians generally). To the conclusion that the language of our Lord must be understood as having reference to the future, it may also be remarked, we are shut up by the following considerations: The supposition that He indicated an existing Kingdom (a) implies that it was set up in (or among) the Pharisees; (b) disconnects His words from the immediately following address to the disciples, while the contrary supposition brings them into manifest and beautiful connection therewith, and with His other utterances.” In a footnote on “observation” and “within,” he adds: “The Pharisees ask ‘when cometh the Kingdom of God?’ He answers, ‘It cometh not with the signs of a gradual approach; neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there, for the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you.’ Then turning to His disciples, He says: ‘The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, Lo here, or lo there: go not after nor follow. For as the lightning that lighteneth (flashing) from one part under heaven shineth to the other part under heaven (comes not with the signs of a gradual approach), so also shall the Son of man be in His day,’ etc. Does not the very unity perceptible in the entire address—the vividness of the scene it presents—the manifest oneness of the doctrine with that elsewhere taught by our Lord, especially on the Mount of Olives—place the stamp of truth on the hypothesis?

**Does it not become manifest that this passage, so far from teaching the doctrine of a present establishment of the Kingdom, must be numbered among those that connect the establishment with the Second Advent.” (FROM [THE THEOCRATIC KINGDOM](#))**