



“All That I Have is Thine”

Luke 9:51 – 15:32

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Introduction

The chapters are the first half of Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem. After many events in his Galilean ministry, Jesus “set his face” (9:51) toward Jerusalem. The journey covers ten chapters and many events along the way, including building faith among the disciples, teaching the crowds who gather around him, and countering the Jewish leaders who increasingly come out to confront him. Through it all, Luke continues to remind us that Jesus marches inexorably toward the city where he will meet his death and fulfill his mission.

In this lesson, we will see the calling of the Seventy, an event uniquely recorded in Luke, along with unique parables such as the prodigal son.

Outline of Luke

An overall outline for the book of Luke is as follows, with the section covered in this lesson in bold:

- Prologue (1:1-4)
- Infancy and Boyhood of Jesus (1:5 – 2:52)
- Preparation for Public Ministry (3:1 – 4:13)
- Ministry in Galilee (4:14 – 9:50)
- **Journey to Jerusalem (9:51 – 19:27)**
- Ministry in Jerusalem (19:28 – 21:38)
- Last Supper, Passion, Death, and Burial (22:1 – 23:56)
- Resurrection Appearances (24:1-53)

Note: In each lesson on the gospels, where there are overlapping or parallel texts, those will be noted in the heading. References in bold are the preferred reading(s) and will be the principal section of analysis, though some unique points in the current gospel will be noted, as well as helpful JST changes.¹

Journey to Jerusalem (9:51 – 15:32)

In this section, Jesus begins his multi-chapter journey to Jerusalem, leaving Galilee behind and working his way to the city and time of his arrest, trial, death, and resurrection. We will cover the first half of this section in this lesson and the rest in the next lesson.

Note: The rest of this section (16:1 – 19:27) will be covered next lesson.

A Samaritan village rejects Jesus – Luke 9:51-56

Though short, this section marks a significant turning point in Luke’s narrative. Until now in Luke’s gospel, Jesus had stayed in Galilee and parts north. That Galilean ministry ended as he turned south into Samaria. Jesus was now determined to go to Jerusalem, which began the path to his crucifixion. The journey that Mark covered in one

¹ Not all JST changes are noted, only those of textual or doctrinal interest. Interested readers are encouraged to see Wayment, *The Complete Joseph Smith Translation of the New Testament* or the manuscripts themselves on the Joseph Smith Papers website (josephsmithpapers.org).

chapter, Luke did in ten (sometimes called Luke's "Travel Narrative"). The story begins in Luke with some opposition from a Samaritan city.

9:51 **when the time was come**. This is a culminating moment, when the story of the past is ended and Jesus turns to a new reality of what will happen to him next. What "was come" was a complete fulfillment of God's plan (Greek *symplērōo*); salvation to all mankind is now in the works.²

9:51 **received up**. This is literally 'taken up' (Greek *analēmpsis*) referring to his future ascension but alluding to the death and resurrection that would have to precede it. The act of being taken up is not something Jesus does, but another person—the Father.

9:51 **he steadfastly set his face**. "Set his face" expresses Jesus' determination to do what must be done; he will not be turned to the right or left or distracted in any way.

9:52 **sent messengers**. Greek *angelos*, which is used for 'angels' but also an appointed messenger. It was likely some disciples preparing the way before him.

9:52 **a village of the Samaritans**. Jews rarely traveled through Samaritan country, even though from Galilee it would shorten the trip to Jerusalem. The Jews harbored intense prejudice against the Samaritans, and many Samaritans reciprocated. The text doesn't say why Jesus went this way, but this is the first mention of him passing through Samaria in Luke.

9:53 **because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem**. This particular village would not accommodate Jesus and his group because they were clearly going to Jerusalem; their destination demonstrated that they were Jews and that they worshipped at the 'false' temple (from the Samaritan perspective).

9:54 **command fire to come down from heaven**. In 2 Kings 1:1-17, Elijah commanded fire to come down from heaven on two groups of soliders from Samaria who came to arrest him. Surely recalling this story, James and John showed their indignation at the village rejecting Jesus by requesting a similar punishment for them. As noted, their request was not without scriptural precedent, and it did show substantial faith. But it was misplaced in terms of time and severity.

9:55-56 **rebuked them**. The best manuscripts do not have the words of Jesus' rebuke, so they were probably added later (from "and said" in v. 55 to "save them" in v. 56).

9:56 **but to save**. Jesus was not there to seek vengeance, but to save all who would accept his teachings. He had to continue to remind the disciples that he was not yet the Messiah who would politically redeem Israel and avenge them of their enemies. He was the humble, suffering Messiah who came to redeem Israel from their sins. His solution to this insulting rejection by the Samaritan village? "And they went to another village."

[Foxes have holes – Luke 9:57-62 \(Matt 8:18-22\)](#)

See Matthew.

[The mission of the Seventy – Luke 10:1-12](#)

As he sent out the Twelve earlier, now Jesus sent out Seventy more to prepare the way before him. They received a very similar commission as the Twelve (compare Matthew 10:7-15) and have the same power to serve others and preach the truth. Indeed, Joseph F. Smith stated that the Seventy "*are apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, subject to the direction of the Twelve, under the direction of the First Presidency of the Church, to preach to gospel to every creature, to every tongue and people under the heavens, to whom they may be sent*" (*Gospel Doctrine*, 183, italics added). Since "apostle" means one sent with authority, it is appropriate to also apply that title to the Seventy. Most of this chapter, including this section on the Seventy, is unique to Luke.

² Brown, *The Testimony of Jesus*, 496.

10:1 **seventy**. Some ancient manuscripts and many modern translations have ‘seventy-two’ here instead of seventy. Scholars are divided about which is correct: some support 72, while others stay with 70. Some of the logic includes the fact that 70 is a common number in the Hebrew OT and Jewish tradition, whereas 72 is only tied to the Greek version of the OT, the Septuagint (or LXX, as it’s commonly abbreviated) in the traditional number of translators and the number of nations in Genesis 10 (70 in the Hebrew, 72 in the Greek). Some scholars, like Metzger, believe that’s exactly why the number should be 72—it could *only* be there if it were the correct reading, because 70 has so much tradition associated with it, no one would have put 72 unless that was the original reading. But other scholarship cites the simple concept that since early on the number of men called here appeared to represent the number of Gentile nations in Genesis 10, it’s clear that Jesus would have called 70 (the number in Hebrew) and later copyists would have changed it to 72 (the number in the Greek version of Genesis 10).³ Latter-day Saint use of the Seventy doesn’t help settle the controversy, since “Seventy” aligns with the only version of Luke 10 available to Joseph Smith.

10:3 **as lambs among wolves**. I suspect many parents feel this way today, sending off their sons and daughters to all parts of the world to serve missions. The warning from the Lord to the Seventy was likely meant to prepare them for challenges, rejection, or worse.

10:4 **salute no man by the way**. Don’t be distracted while on your mission. ‘Stay on task’ is a phrase parents sometimes use with their children that has the same meaning.

10:6 **son of peace**. This literal rendering has the meaning of someone ready to receive ‘peace,’ which is the message and blessings of the gospel.

10:7 **eating and drinking such things as they give**. The Seventy were not to worry about the kosher restrictions of the Law of Moses on this mission; being among Gentiles, they were to eat and drink whatever their hosts offered. This both helped them avoid offense as well as making eating practical when among people who did not share their beliefs. See also verse 8.

10:7 **the labourer is worthy of his hire**. This phrase is only found in the New Testament here and in 1 Timothy 5:18 (which is the same in the Greek but different in the KJV translation). Paul quotes it as ‘scripture’ along with a phrase from Deuteronomy 25:4. Since the ‘labourer’ phrase is not found anywhere in the Old Testament (Hebrew or Greek), it shows that Paul either had scriptures we do not today, or that he considered Jesus’ words as scripture. Because the Greek term translated “scripture” in 1 Timothy 5:18 is *graphē*, which has to do with writing, it also indicates that Jesus’ words were written down by Paul’s day, at least by Luke—which argues for an early Lucan authorship, such as during Paul’s first imprisonment at Caesarea and/or Rome (since 1 Timothy was written after both). This phrase is also used three times in the Doctrine and Covenants as part of a call to missionary service (see D&C 31:5; 84:79; 106:3).

10:9 **heal the sick . . . the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you**. Isaiah 29:18-19 and 35:5-6 both suggest that healing the sick was a sign of the arrival of the Messiah and kingdom of God. The Seventy were to heal the sick as a sign that their words were true.

10:11 **the very dust of your city. . . we do wipe off**. As a sign that their words had been rejected, Jesus instructed the Seventy to say these specific words, passing judgment on that city that will be recognized by God in the end.

[Woes upon Galilean cities – Luke 10:13-16 \(Matt 11:20-24\)](#)

See Matthew.

10:13 **Woe unto thee**. Jesus briefly varied from the script sending out the Seventy to offer condemnation of some of the towns in Galilee—Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. The JST starts the verse with a transition in the KJV that makes the switch smoother: “**Then began he to upbraid the people in every city wherein his mighty works were done, who received him not, saying, Woe unto thee, Chorazin!**”

³ Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 126-127; Brown, *The Testimony of Luke*, 508.

The return of the Seventy – Luke 10:17-24 (Matt 11:25-27; 13:16-17)

10:17 **the seventy returned**. Luke made an abrupt transition covering a long time period. Since Luke's record is the only one telling us about the Seventy, we have no sense of the length of this mission, but it is likely short as Jesus was at most only months away from his final Passover in Jerusalem.

10:18 **Satan as lightning fall from heaven**. This is an apparent allusion to Isaiah 14:12, which is usually interpreted as having to do with Lucifer's pre-existent fall resulting from his rebellion.

10:18 **JST**

Luke 10:18 KJV	JST
And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.	And he said unto them, As lightning falleth from heaven, I beheld Satan also falling.

In the JST, Jesus implied that because of the current success of the Seventy Satan was impacted, falling from heaven. John uses similar imagery and took it further in John 12:31 and Revelation 12:7-17; 20:1-3, 10.

10:20 **your names are written in heaven**. It was common practice for cities to keep lists of their citizens. These were used to determine rights, privileges, and to provide appropriate protection. In this phrase, Jesus alluded to this practice but pointing to a recording in God's presence, the eternal city. Some Old Testament scriptures use the same metaphor (Exodus 32:32-33; Psalm 69:28; Isaiah 4:3; Daniel 12:1; and Malachi 3:16-17) and some other New Testament scriptures, too (Philippians 4:3; Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27).

10:21 **revealed them unto babes**. "Babes" is the Greek *nēpios*, meaning 'infant' or 'not of age,' but also 'unskilled' or 'unlearned.' The opposite word is *sunetos*, meaning 'learned,' and which is translated "prudent" in this verse. "Compared with the learned men of the time, such as the rabbis and scribes, whose knowledge served but to harden their hearts against the truth, these devoted servants were as babes in humility, trust, and faith. Such children were and are among the nobles of the kingdom" (*Jesus the Christ*, 428).

10:22 **JST**

Luke 10:22 KJV	JST
All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal <i>him</i> .	All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth that the Son is the Father; and that the Father is the Son, but him to whom the Son will reveal it .

The KJV shows the close relationship of the Father and the Son, but the JST changes this verse to highlight the dual role of Jehovah/Jesus. While we know that the Father and the Son are separate personages, Elder Bruce McConkie notes that there are three specific ways in which Jesus is the Father (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:467-8):

1. He is the Father in the sense of being the Creator and is thus referred to as "the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are" (Ether 4:7).
2. He is the Father of those who abide in his gospel. Faithful saints who receive him have power given them to become his sons (D&C 39:4). Those who are "spiritually begotten...are born of him"; they become "the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters" (Mosiah 5:7).
3. He is the Father by divine investiture of authority. That is, the Father places his own name, power, authority, and Godship on the Son, and empowers him to act and speak in the first person as though he were the Father so that his words and acts become and are those of the Father. All things are truly delivered to him by his Father.

10:23 **see the things that ye see**. Speaking privately to his disciples, Jesus reminded them of the great things they were seeing and hearing firsthand, things that "prophets and kings" have wanted to see and hear for thousands of

years (v. 24). We could add today, they lived in a time that many would love to go back to—to walk the streets with Jesus, to hear him teach, to be healed at his hands. They were living in the most historic of times but were likely unaware of the significance of much of it. Will future generations say something similar about us, living in the fulness of times and in the last days before his coming?

The parable of the good Samaritan – Luke 10:25-37

As with several of the parables, only Luke gives us this story of love and sacrifice that teaches that goodness is not defined by ethnicity or position in society, but by selfless service to others. The question that prompted the parable is in verse 25: “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” It is the same question asked by another in Luke 18:18, but with a very different response there. Jesus tailored his teaching to his audience and situation.

10:25 **a certain lawyer**. Literally, ‘an expert in the Law’, another way of saying a ‘scribe.’

10:25 **tempted him**. This doesn’t have to mean with malice, since the word means ‘to test.’ But the likely connotation is one of entrapment. Elder McConkie called him “one of those intellectual religionists who thrive on contention and delight in dissension” (*The Mortal Messiah*, 3:176).

10:26 **What is written in the law?** Jesus turned the question right back to him, who claimed to be a great interpreter and recorder of the law of Moses for Israel in that day.

10:27 **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God**. The answer the scribe gave is part of the *Shema* or daily prayer of a Jew (from Deuteronomy 6:4-5), generally considered the greatest commandment in that day, and a related text from Leviticus 19:18 which was associated with the first as the second greatest commandment. Jesus gave a similar answer in Mark 12:28-34.

10:28 **this do, and thou shalt live**. Commending the scribe for his response, Jesus promised him that if he kept these two great commandments, he would “live,” meaning to truly enjoy life (Greek *zaō*).

10:29 **willing to justify himself**. Or, ‘intending to show himself as righteous.’ The lawyer’s first attempt to start a debate had fizzled as Jesus turned the question right back to him. So with the desire to reengage Jesus, he posed another question, one that he might have thought more challenging than his first.

10:29 **who is my neighbor?** The normal definition would have been ‘a fellow Israelite,’ though Leviticus 19:34 includes a resident alien living in Israel in the group. Samaritans and Gentiles certainly would not have been considered as ‘neighbors.’

10:30 **down from Jerusalem to Jericho**. This was a barren and desolate seventeen-mile road, dropping from over 2,500 feet above sea level at Jerusalem to about 800 feet below sea level at Jericho. People generally traveled in large groups to be safer from the many robbers that would lie in wait.

10:31-32 **a certain priest . . . a Levite**. Priests were direct descendants of Aaron who served in the temple and had other duties according to the Law. Levites were other members of the tribe of Levi who had supporting duties. Both would be rendered ceremoniously unclean if they were to touch a dead body. Jesus’ audience would probably explain this as the reason they passed by, fearing the man was actually dead. But it’s actually no excuse as they were both clearly headed *away* from Jerusalem and their duties at the temple, and so shouldn’t have needed to worry about uncleanness.

10:32 **JST**

Luke 10:32 KJV And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.	JST And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked upon him, and passed by on the other side of the way; for they desired in their hearts that it might not be known that they had seen him.
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Speaking of both the priest and the Levite, this change speaks to their motivation, which can only be speculated about in the KJV. They put as much distance as they could between themselves and the man on the road so they could have plausible deniability—'I was on the other side of the road; how could I have noticed him in the weeds?'

10:33 **a certain Samaritan**. Most likely Jesus' listeners were anticipating a conclusion where the third and helpful person was a local rabbi or some other respected figure. The mention of a Samaritan would have been shocking.

10:34 **oil and wine**. Oil was a cleaning and soothing agent, and wine was to disinfect the wounds.

10:34 **brought him to an inn**. This is not the coarser inn of Luke 2:7 (*kataluma*), which was an informal public shelter where travelers could gather for the night, sometimes part of a private residence. Rather, this was a *pandocheion*, somewhat like an ancient hotel with private rooms to rent. It would have cost more for the Samaritan but been a place where the injured man could have received some attention.

10:35 **two pence**. This was 'two denarii' or nearly a day's wages. The JST changes it simply to "**money**" without specifying an amount.

10:37 **He that shewed mercy**. How painful was it for the scribe to admit that the Samaritan was clearly the good neighbor in this story? We don't know from the text, but it's easy to imagine that his reaction was either begrudging acknowledgement or surprised comprehension. The Samaritan is the hero, the good guy? But no other answer could be given, and thus Jesus once again destroyed the common wisdom in favor of a broader view of God's love for all people.

One important interpretation of the parable goes beyond the obvious "be kind to others" conclusion. *We* are the wounded man, buffeted by thieves (Satan and his devils) who seek our destruction, and by our own sinful choices (traveling on the dangerous Jericho road alone). Religious leaders, political leaders, and others might profess concern about our condition, but in the end do not or cannot help. Only Jesus, "despised and rejected of men" as a Samaritan would be among Jews, comes to our aid, unconditionally helping us and paying the price for our full recovery. Thus the greatest commandment—to love God with all our heart, might, mind, and strength—is to accept fully the atonement of Jesus, and be healed of all our wounds. To accept Jesus is then to be his disciple, offering unselfish service to all around us, regardless of status, learning, or condition.

Mary and Martha – Luke 10:38-42

We are here introduced to two women who will play key roles in Jesus' life as he finishes his mission. Martha's house became his base in Judea, and the sisters took good care of him and the crowd of disciples that surely showed up with him (though not unannounced, given the mission of the Seventy to go before him and prepare the way).

10:38 **certain village**. We learn from John that this village is Bethany, about two miles east of Jerusalem, on the other side of the Mount of Olives.

10:38 **Martha received him into her house**. "Martha" means 'mistress,' and Mary is Hebrew Miriam, meaning 'rebellion,' which both play well into the story. The house appears to belong to Martha ("her house"). We don't know if Martha and Mary are single, windowed, or married, though the consensus is that they are likely unmarried but with some source of income (perhaps through their brother, Lazarus, whom we only meet in John).

10:39 **Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet**. This was the position of a disciple (compare Act 22:3 where Paul says he was "brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel"). Women were not generally allowed to be disciples in that day. One rabbi said in the *Mishnah* that giving a girl knowledge of the Law was like teaching her lechery. For Jesus to allow Mary to be his disciple broke all cultural norms.

10:40 **cumbered about much serving**. Martha was playing the traditional role of a hostess, cleaning the house, serving the food, and taking care of her guests. Mary appears to be the slacker here, shirking her duty to sit at Jesus' feet and listen to him teach.

10:40 **bid her therefore that she help me.** Like Martha, we might be inclined to want Jesus to tell her to get to work! She can sit at his feet when everyone is fed and the house is ready for the night.

10:41-42 **Martha, Martha.** This commentary is enlightening:

There may not be a more difficult story in Luke's entire Gospel for female disciples today to understand than this one. Many women have long been uncomfortable with this familiar story. There certainly is no agreement about its basic meaning in any commentary or discussion. People respond to it differently, often passionately. Women in the Church today are often identified as being 'a Martha' or 'a Mary.' Many women relate deeply with Martha, and others equally as deeply with Mary. Some resolve the conflict by suggesting that at one time a woman needs to be a Martha and at other times a Mary. Others see the issue as being a question of priorities. How many times does someone have Jesus at her home? Martha should have been prepared for Jesus' visit, so that she too could have sat at his feet.

The Greek text emphasizes that Martha was 'anxious' and 'distracted about many things,' probably including Mary's choice to sit at Jesus' feet while Martha continued to work. She wanted to rectify the situation by having Mary come and help her; however, Jesus surprised Martha by telling her that there was one necessity (hearing the word). Mary had chosen it, and Jesus would not take it away from her. Perhaps Jesus wanted Martha to understand that although many things distracted her, there was only one necessary focus—that of being a disciple . . . Mary's discipleship is not to be overshadowed by Martha's altruistic service.

Another possible interpretation also exists. Instead of being rebuked by Jesus, Martha was being called to discipleship. The repeated 'Martha, Martha' is reminiscent of earlier calls from the Lord. When God spoke to Jacob (Israel) in Beersheba he said, 'Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I.' Later, when the Lord called Samuel he said, 'Samuel, Samuel!' He answered, 'Here I am.' . . . Are Jesus' words, 'Martha, Martha' such a call—an invitation to leave her family and friends and the duties required of her as the householder and follow Jesus full time as others have already done? (Richard and Jeni Holzapfel, *Sisters at the Well*, 118-119).

Offerings and prayer – Luke 11:1-13 (Matt 6:9-13; 7:7-11)

After hearing Jesus pray, the disciples asked him to teach *them* to pray. He substantially repeated the prayer he gave in the Sermon on the Mount, then proceeded to give specific advice about prayer in the form of two comparisons. The key in applying these is not to compare God's ability or interest in our prayers to the people in the stories, but to contrast God's perfect responses to our prayers with the imperfect ones given by the human respondents.

11:4 (JST) "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one ~~that~~ **who** is indebted to us. And ~~lead~~ **let** us not ~~into~~ **be led unto** temptation; but deliver us from evil; **for thine is the kingdom, and power. Amen.**"

At the end of Matthew 6:13 is a phrase considered by scholars to be a late addition to the textual history and thus not an original part of Matthew. The phrase is (in the KJV): "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." Some ancient manuscripts have part of the phrase (such as "the kingdom"), some have other parts (such as "the power" or "for ever"), and some have parts not in the KJV ("forever and ever"). Most of the oldest manuscripts do not have it at all (Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2000), 14). This has led the editors of many modern Bible translations, such as the New International Version and the New Revised Standard Version, to drop the phrase altogether. Likewise, in the related text in Luke 11:4, the phrase is absent, even in the KJV: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Many scholars similarly consider the final phrase in Luke ("deliver us from evil") a late addition and so have also dropped it from modern translations.

In the JST for these verses, the Prophet modified both verses in a way that responds to the later scholarly concerns raised over the authenticity of these verses. He translated the two as follows: "Deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever *and forever*. Amen" (Matthew 6:13). "Deliver us from evil, *for thine is the kingdom, and power. Amen*" (Luke 11:4).

Not only did the Prophet retain the contested ascription in Matthew in his translation, he added to it in a way that has support in ancient manuscripts—the addition of “and forever” is attested both in some ancient Greek and Latin manuscripts (Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 14). In Luke, he added two of the three parts of the Matthean conclusion—“kingdom” and “power”—and the concluding “Amen.” Scholars may rightly argue that such a change in Luke has little or no manuscript support, but the Prophet was not using manuscripts. Relying on the Spirit, he took a step toward harmonizing the two accounts, something he did in a number of places in the New Testament (The most obvious example is Mark 13 which Joseph Smith basically made identical to his translation of Matthew 24 (Joseph Smith—Matthew), copying the Matthew text nearly word for word into Mark). But he did not make them identical, which would have been easy to do. Thus we assert that in this case Joseph Smith was restoring original intent, which is similar but not identical, reflecting the two different approaches of the Evangelists (Matthew from his own recollection, Luke from one or more eyewitnesses; see Luke 1:2) (Compare this experience to D&C 7, which is a translation of an ancient document written and hid up by John. It is quite likely that this document no longer exists, yet by the spirit of revelation, Joseph Smith was able to translate it and provide it to the young Church.)” (David A. LeFevre, “The Sermon on the Mount in the Joseph Smith Translation,” in *The Sermon on the Mount in Latter-day Scripture*, ed. Gaye Strathearn, Thomas A. Wayment, and Daniel L. Belnap. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2010, 283–311).

11:5 ***Friend, lend me three loaves.*** The man at midnight is conforming to societal norms; his guests need to be cared for, and he has not the means to do so. He is required to ask of his friend. Though not happy about the intrusion, and not out of friendship, but “because of his importunity” (v. 8, meaning ‘persistence’ but done to retain honor for himself and his community) he will provide whatever is needed. Our Father is never put out by our requests but will answer our prayers (v. 10). Not to do so would put into question his very honor and glory.

11:11 ***will he give him a stone?*** What father would give his children evil gifts—stones, snakes, or scorpions—when a basic one—bread, fish, or egg—is requested? Our Father in heaven is perfect, and in his love would only give us those things which are for our benefit (even if sometimes it *feels* like we’re getting a stone when we asked for bread!).

11:13 ***shall your heavenly Father give.*** Concerning answers to prayers, a comment by C. S. Lewis provides poignant contemplation:

Little people like you and me, if our prayers are sometimes granted, beyond all hope and probability, had better not draw hasty conclusions to our own advantage. If we were stronger, we might be less tenderly treated. If we were braver, we might be sent, with far less help, to defend far more desperate posts in the great battle (quoted in Neal Maxwell, *Moving in His Majesty and Power*, preface).

[Beelzebul – Luke 11:14-28 \(Matt 12:22-30, 43-45; Mark 3:22-27\)](#)

See Matthew with comments here.

Several of these sayings are given in other places in different order or wording. Fundamentally, Jesus used his ability to cast out devils to prove that he was the Messiah, since Satan (represented by the name Beelzebub, or the ancient Baal-zebul—‘Baal [Lord], prince’, leader of evil forces) would not cast out his own devils and set himself back. So Jesus must have been doing this by “the finger of God” which witnessed that his teachings were true.

When a woman praised him, he turned the praise to those who kept the commandments (vv. 27-28).

[Denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees – Luke 11:29-54 \(Matt 12:38-42; 5:15; 6:22-23; 15:1-9; 23:4, 6-7, 13, 23, 25-32, 34-36; Mark 8:11-12; 4:21; 7:1-9\)](#)

See also Matthew. Luke puts many sayings in this single block that Matthew and Mark spread out over several chapters and in different circumstances.

11:29-32 ***they seek a sign.*** When Jesus perceived that they sought a sign (which he have given in abundance with healings and casting out devils), he gave the sign of Jonah (not mentioning the three days in the fish like Matthew

but Jonah’s teachings in v. 32), and contrasted their rejection of his teachings to the wicked Ninevites nevertheless accepting Jonah’s words and repenting.

11:37 **a certain Pharisee besought him to dine.** An unnamed Pharisee, probably in Bethany, invited Jesus to eat at his house, but the Savior used it as an opportunity to berate the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders. It is likely that the meal was not a pleasant social gathering!

11:38 **he had not first washed.** Jesus (intentionally?) didn’t wash according to the Pharisaic custom, which was surprising to his host. They reclined (not “sat down” as the KJV) as they ate the mid-morning meal.

11:39 **make clean the outside.** Jesus taught that inward cleanness (thoughts and feelings) is more important than outward ritual cleansing. Both are made (and thus seen) by God (v. 40).

11:41 **JST**

Luke 11:41 KJV	JST
But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.	But if ye would rather, give alms of such things as ye have, and observe to do all things which I have commanded you, then would your inward parts be clean also.

Jesus taught that keeping his commandments is what cleanses the inward vessel.

11:42-52 **woe unto you.** He said this phrase six times (11:42-52), for their hypocrisy condemned them. They worried about the smallest details, like tithing herb plants from a backyard garden, but overlooked the more important things, such as seeing that justice (“judgment”) was done for the poor and showing love to God. They sought after the prominent social positions (“uppermost seats”) and recognition from others, but they were really like unmarked graves which can ritually defile people around them merely by unknowingly touching or walking over them (Leviticus 21:11; Numbers 19:11-22, especially v. 16). They imposed difficult and complicated laws on people but were not ready to lift a finger to lighten the load of somebody in trouble. They built monuments to the prophets that their fathers killed, but rejected living prophets and apostles among them. By this wickedness, the blood of the ancient prophets would also be required at their hands.

11:51 **Abel . . . Zacharias.** Abel was the first person killed (Genesis 4:1-12, the first book) and Zacharias the last, at least according to the order of their scriptures (2 Chronicles 24:19-22, which was considered the last book). This is not a reference to John’s father Zacharias, from Luke 1.

11:52 **the key of knowledge.** By their restrictive and uninspired interpretations, the scribes had taken away the “key of knowledge” or “the fullness of the scriptures” (according to the JST), thus hindering themselves and others from entering into the kingdom.

11:53-54 **to provoke him.** With Jesus’ condemning words ringing in their ears, the scribes and Pharisees sought even more to find something they could use against Jesus.

The leaven of the Pharisees – Luke 12:1 (Matt 16:5-6; Mark 8:14-15)

See Mark.

Do not fear – Luke 12:2-12 (Matt 10:26-33; 12:31-33; 10:19-20; Mark 3:28-30; 13:11)

Once Luke told us that Jesus “set his face” to Jerusalem (9:51), he spent about ten chapters giving us Jesus’ teachings and acts in the Judean and Perea regions—the southern part of the land. Much of this material is only found in Luke, though some of it is also in Mark and Matthew (much of it from his Sermon on the Mount). In many cases, however, the wording is quite different in Luke, perhaps illustrating how Jesus used similar teachings in different circumstances, tailoring them to the audience and situation, or at least how Luke organized them differently in his telling.

Harmonies don't typically list these verses together because Luke's are delivered at a different time in Jesus' mission than the related teachings in Matthew and Mark, which record them during the earlier Galilean ministry. However, comparing the verses yields insights into Jesus' meaning using the same concepts in different circumstances (some thoughts in tables below as the verses are reviewed in context).

Luke 12:1	Matthew 16:6; Mark 8:15
Luke 12:2-9	Matthew 10:26-33
Luke 12:10	Matthew 12:31; Mark 3:29
Luke 12:11-12	Matthew 10:18-20; Mark 13:11
Luke 12:22-31	Matthew 6:25-33
Luke 12:34	Matthew 6:21
Luke 12:42-48	Matthew 24:45-51
Luke 12:51-53	Matthew 10:34-36
Luke 12:54-56	Matthew 16:2-3
Luke 12:58-59	Matthew 5:25-26
Luke 13:19-21	Matthew 13:31-33
Luke 13:24	Matthew 7:13-14
Luke 13:30	Matthew 19:30; Mark 10:31
Luke 13:34-35	Matthew 23:37-39
Luke 14:34-35	Matthew 5:13
Luke 15:3-7	Matthew 18:12-14
Luke 16:13	Matthew 6:24
Luke 16:17	Matthew 5:18
Luke 16:18	Matthew 19:9
Luke 17:2	Matthew 18:6; Mark 9:42
Luke 17:3-4	Matthew 18:21-22
Luke 17:6	Matthew 17:20

12:1 ***In the mean time.*** Or, 'in these circumstances,' referring to the persecution he was experiencing from the Pharisees and other Jewish leaders (noted at the end of chapter 11).

12:1 ***innumerable multitude.*** "Innumerable" is the Greek *myrias*, which means "ten thousand" but represents a number too large to count. This is the largest crowd Jesus had yet taught. This is ironic in light of the persecution just mentioned. When Luke was writing his gospel, a Christian could literally be killed, imprisoned, ruined economically, or hurt in other ways by proclaiming his faith. Perhaps as an encouragement to them, Luke noted that Jesus got the most attention when he was also under the biggest threat and that he went forward without fear of man (a recurring theme in these verses). In other words, as Satan was mustering his forces, so God's forces were also building, and God's forces will always prevail!

Comparison

Luke 12:1	Matt 16:6; Mark 8:15	Jesus defines what the leaven is: hypocrisy. The disciples are told to fear not the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and they are the ones delivering the message in Luke; five sparrows and two farthings in Luke, two sparrows and one farthing in Matt; God <i>knows</i> about them in Luke; in Matt Jesus confesses faithful disciples and denies unfaithful ones before the Father, in Luke before angels.
Luke 12:2-9	Matt 10:26-33	
Luke 12:10	Matt 12:31; Mark 3:29	Luke's version is very personal to Jesus—he is the one someone is speaking against.
Luke 12:11-12	Matt 10:18-20; Mark 13:11	Luke adds "synagogues," showing that persecution comes from Jew and Gentile, while Matthew and Mark only mention Gentile rulers.

12:5 **cast into hell**. The Greek word used here is *gehenna*, a transliteration from the Hebrew *gehenna*, which means ‘valley of Hinnom’ (also called ‘Topheth’ in the Old Testament). This valley, just southwest of Jerusalem, was infamous for two things. First, children were sacrificed to the god Molech there (2 Kings 16:3; 21:6; 23:10; Jer. 7:32; 19:4-6; 32:34-35), marking it as a place of terrible wickedness. Second, it became the trash dump for the city (Jeremiah 19:2, 10-13). As rubbish, dead animals, and other items were thrown here, they would be burned. The smoke, flames, and stench thus came to be a symbol for eternal punishment, or hell.

12:6 **five sparrows sold for two farthings**. A farthing is an *asses* (*assaria* in the plural) or about 1/16 of a *denarius*. Sparrows are small birds with hardly any meat, but sometimes purchased by the poorest as food. The message is that God remembers even these ‘worthless’ birds, so of course he remembers you.

12:9-10 **JST**

Luke 12:9-10 KJV	JST
But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.	But he who denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God. Now his disciples knew that he said this, because they had spoken evil against him before the people; for they were afraid to confess him before men. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, He knoweth our hearts, and he speaketh to our condemnation, and we shall not be forgiven.
And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.	But he answered them, and said unto them, Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, and repenteth, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him who blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him.

These changes explain *why* Jesus taught this doctrine, as part of chastising and teaching his disciples to be bold in declaring their testimonies and in repenting. Compare D&C 105:15; 132:27.

The parable of the rich fool – Luke 12:13-21

12:13 **Speak to my brother**. This verse gives us the background for the parable, which was that a man wanted Jesus to intervene in a family squabble about inheritance. The speaker was likely the younger son who has somehow not received his just inheritance according to the Law and was asking Jesus to command his older brother to divide it up fairly. See Genesis 48:6; Numbers 36:6-9; Deuteronomy 21:15-17. Jesus used it as an opportunity to teach about covetousness (v. 15).

12:16 **brought forth plentifully**. The parable started out with a story of a rich man whose farm was very productive, so much that he could not store his crop in the existing storage facilities. So he tore them down and built larger ones to store his abundance. (The point to note is that he amassed greater and greater wealth all to himself, not sharing his blessing with anyone else, which would make him “rich toward God,” v. 21.)

12:19 **eat, drink and be merry**. A quote from Ecclesiastes 8:15, but also a common expression of the Greek Epicurean philosophy, well-known in Jesus’ day, which sought comfort and pleasure above all other pursuits. See also 1 Corinthians 15:32, where Paul (writing before Luke) drew on the same scripture.

12:20 **fool**. Greek *aphrōn*, implying stupidity as well as moral and spiritual deficiency. See Jeremiah 17:11.

On discipleship – Luke 12:22-34 (Matt 6:25-34, 19-21)

Luke 12:22-31	Matt 6:25-33	Luke adds, if you can’t do the little things, why be anxious about the big things? (v. 26). Don’t be of doubtful mind.
Luke 12:34	Matt 6:21	Identical

12:24 **ravens**. Unclean birds that could not be eaten and so had little value (Leviticus 11:15; Deuteronomy 14:14). Yet even so, God provides for them, as the Psalm says: “He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry” (Psalm 147:9).

12:25 **add to his stature one cubit**. Better translated, this would be ‘add one cubit to his stride’. A cubit, of course, is about 18 inches, not a little thing (see verse 26). This figurative expression actually has the sense of not being to add even one minute to our lives, the ‘stride’ representing moving forward in life.

12:28 **cast into the oven**. Or, ‘cast into the fire’. Dried grass was used to start fires.

12:30-31 **JST**

Luke 12:30-31 KJV	JST
For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.	For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father who is in heaven knoweth that ye have need of these things. And ye are sent unto them to be their ministers. And the laborer is worthy of his hire, for the law saith, That a man shall not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.
But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.	Therefore , seek ye to bring forth the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

The quote from “the law” in Luke is found in Deuteronomy 25:4. What makes this change worth noting is that the only other place in the New Testament where this idea of not muzzling the ox is found is in the writings of Paul (1 Corinthians 9:9; 1 Timothy 5:18). In both cases, Paul is quoting the scripture as an example of how God will care for a worthy laborer in his kingdom. If Joseph Smith had inserted this reference to muzzling the ox in Matthew, Mark, or John, it would not have had the same significance. First, Luke was Paul’s missionary companion and friend, so for it to also be in his Gospel strengthens the tie between these two men. Secondly, Paul is alone in using this expression in the KJV New Testament, but in the JST Jesus said it first (strictly chronologically), and with the same allegorical meaning. Thus through a JST change of ancient scripture, Paul’s use of the verse is actually quoting a teaching of the Savior. Strengthening the idea that muzzling the ox is a statement of Jesus, the second half of the verse in 1 Timothy 5:18 where Paul uses that phrase includes a parallel remark, “And, the labourer is worthy of his hire.” This is not a quote from the Old Testament but is a quote from Jesus himself, as recorded in Luke 10:7. The phrase “and” ties the two quotations together, giving them equal weight. See George W. Knight III, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 234. Note also that although the book of Luke was written after 1 Corinthians and perhaps 1 Timothy, Luke’s sources . . . were probably some of the same sources from which Paul got his information about Jesus’ sayings and ministry (LeFevre, “The Sermon on the Mount”).

12:32 **little flock**. The Greek term is *poimnion*, meaning a flock, as in sheep, but also figuratively a church or body of saints. This is indirect but interesting evidence for Jesus organizing congregations of followers during his lifetime (see D&C 6:34; 35:27).

12:33 **sell that ye have**. This is not ‘sell *all* that you have’ as with the rich young man (18:22), but ‘sell that which is at your disposal’, recognizing that all things come from God.

12:34 **where your treasure is**. Compare 2 Nephi 9:30, where Jacob offered a commentary on this idea.

The need to be watchful – Luke 12:35-48 (Matt 24:42-51)

See also Matthew.

12:37 **come forth and serve them**. In a complete role reversal, the master put on slave’s clothing, had the slaves sit down, and served them a wonderful meal. Absurd to Jesus’ hearers, he was drawing on scriptural symbolism from

Isaiah: “ And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined” (Isaiah 25:6; see also 65:13-14).

12:37-38 *JST*

<p>Luke 12:37-38 KJV Blessed <i>are</i> those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.</p>	<p>JST Verily I say unto you, Blessed <i>are</i> those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: for he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. For, behold, he cometh in the first watch of the night, and he shall also come in the second watch, and again he shall come in the third watch.</p>
<p>And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.</p>	<p>And verily I say unto you, He hath already come, as it is written of him; and again when he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, blessed are those servants when he cometh, that he shall find so doing. For the Lord of those servants shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And now, verily I say these things unto you, that ye may know this, that the coming of the Lord is as a thief in the night. And it is like unto a man who is an householder, who, if he watcheth not his goods, the thief cometh in an hour of which he is not aware, and taketh his goods, and divideth them among his fellows.</p>

This scripture teaches that whether we live to see the second coming or die before, the result is the same. If we have lived righteously, repented, and applied the atonement, we are welcomed to the wedding feast. Bruce McConkie wrote, “Thus, in effect, the Lord comes in every watch of the night, on every occasion when men are called to face death and judgment” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* 1:677).

12:39 **broken through**. Literally, ‘dug through.’ With mud brick walls, a thief could dig through a back wall potentially unnoticed by others more easily than trying to break a door down.

- Luke 12:42-48 Matt 24:45-51 The steward gets a portion of the food; the wicked servant beats the women servants also, and is drunken; he is sent to join the unbelievers and beaten with many stripes; those who receive much have equal expectations.
- Luke 12:51-53 Matt 10:34-36 Not the sword, but a division; five in one house divided.
- Luke 12:54-56 Matt 16:2-3 Different weather comparisons—clouds from the west mean a storm, a south wind means heat; the focus not on the second coming but the first.
- Luke 12:58-59 Matt 5:25-26 Sounds more like a proper legal proceeding than a general warning.

12:43-45 *JST*

<p>Luke 12:43-45 KJV Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.</p>	<p>JST And they said, Who then is that faithful and wise servant? And the Lord said unto them, it is that servant who watcheth, to impart his portion of meat in due season. Blessed be that servant, whom his lord shall find when he cometh so doing.</p>
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Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.	Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.
But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;	But the evil servant is he who is not found watching . And if that servant is not found watching , he will say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the manservants and the maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken.

The JST adds the additional insight that the faithful servant is he “who watcheth” and the evil servant is “he who is not found watching.” Furthermore, watching is defined as being kind to others, feeding them, and sharing what you have with others in need.

12:44 **ruler over all**. Jesus’ listeners would no doubt think of Joseph, sold into Egypt as a slave but through his faithfulness becoming ruler over all of Egypt, second only to the king himself.

12:46 **cut him in sunder . . . his portion with the unbelievers**. This literally means to ‘cut him in half’ and ‘bury him with the faithless.’ Being cut in two was a known punishment for great wickedness. To not be buried with God’s people was a great indignity, but it could also have the meaning of going to hell.

12:47 **knew his Lord’s will, and prepared not**. The first servant is killed and not allowed burial (v. 46). This second servant is less wicked as he simply did not prepare but was not beating others and acting contrary to his master’s wishes. His punishment was “many stripes,” still very painful but not death.

12:48 **he that knew not**. A third servant type is those that don’t know the master’s will but still did things inherently wrong—we might say, sinned in ignorance. This person is beaten “with few stripes.”

The cost of discipleship – Luke 12:49-59 (Matt 10:34-36; 16:2-3; 5:25-26)

12:49 **fire**. Fire was a symbol for God’s judgment.

12:49 **what will I, if it be already kindled**. Or, ‘how I wish it were already started.’ The Second Coming and the associated judgment is not yet, but is in a future time, though we may long for it as we deal with the injustices of the day.

12:50 **baptism to be baptized with**. This is not the priesthood ordinance of immersion, but a mission that is so overwhelming as to feel like one is under water.

12:50 **straitened till it be accomplished**. Or, ‘I am squeezed (compressed, pressured, suffering) until it is done.’

12:51 **peace on earth? . . . Nay**. Didn’t the angels announce, “on earth peace, good will toward men” at his coming? (Luke 2:14). Yet Jesus says peace is not why he has come, and peace was not something his disciples experienced in the early church. The angels’ announcement has to do with internal and eternal peace, not the short-term peace that we often seek in this troubled world. Following Jesus goes against the grain of this world, and thus can bring “division” and strife (vv. 52-53).

12:58 **hale thee to the judge**. The call to reconcile legal issues appears out of place in a discussion of the Second Coming and final judgment, but the meaning is probably directly related. Jesus was counseling them in parable fashion to be reconciled to God, the ultimate judge, to avoid being condemned by Satan, the adversary, and thus going to prison/hell.

The parable of the barren fig tree – Luke 13:1-9

The chapter break should not, in this case, signal a change in topic. Indeed, Jesus continued the concept of preparing for his Second Coming with examples that show the importance of repentance.

13:1 **whose blood Pilate has mingled with their sacrifices**. While this specific incident is not known from history, Pilate was a typical Roman ruler who met protest with force. On one occasion, demonstrations broke out in

Jerusalem about him using temple money to finance an aqueduct for Jerusalem. Pilate sent soldiers who surrounded and attacked the protestors, killing many (see Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.3.2).

13:4 **upon whom the tower of Siloam fell.** Another unknown incident, though the pool of Siloam was very real, in the southeastern corner of Jerusalem, supplying much of the water for the city. No tower is known, but it could have been part of the wall in that part of the city or some other structure nearby.

13:4 **think ye that they were sinners.** Personal trials, illness, and death were often attributed to sin. Jesus was not saying it was true—just the opposite, actually—but was saying, ‘They were not particularly evil people, yet look what happened to them.’

13:5 **except ye repent.** The message he was drawing out of these two incidents was one of repentance. They were merely examples of a worse fate coming to us if we do not change and follow Jesus.

13:6 **a fig tree planted.** Micah 7:1 used a similar metaphor, where the prophet desired a nice fig from the tree (“a firstripe fruit”), meaning the godly and upright, but which could not be found. Luke does not include the cursing of the fig tree found in Matt 21:19-21 and Mark 11:13-14, 20-22 but includes this parable of a similar barren one.

13:9 **JST**

Luke 13:9 KJV	JST
And if it bear fruit, well : and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.	And if it bear fruit, the tree is saved : and if not, after that thou shalt cut it down. And many other parables spake he unto the people.

Luke recorded more parables than the other gospel writers, and here we learn that there were more still that were not recorded!

Jesus heals a woman on the Sabbath – Luke 13:10-17

13:10 **teaching in one of the synagogues.** As a visiting teacher, Jesus would have been invited to give an interpretation of scripture, as part of the service.

13:11 (JST) “...could in no wise ~~lift~~ **straighten up herself.**” She was probably suffering from osteoarthritis or scoliosis or a similar disorder that caused her back to bend over.

13:12 **when Jesus saw her.** This probably did not happen as part of the service, since women sat separately, but perhaps after the service in the courtyard.

13:13 **he laid his hands on her.** Unlike other healings where Jesus just spoke words, he intentionally (based on the reaction in v. 14) took physical action here in order to demonstrate against the Pharisaic rules about work on the Sabbath.

13:14 **said unto the people.** The synagogue ruler didn’t address Jesus directly, but criticized him to the people, perhaps to avoid a confrontation or out of a pretense of respect for his position as a teacher, but his message was an attempt to dishonor Jesus just the same.

13:14 **six days . . . come and be healed.** The rabbis considered healing on the Sabbath only appropriate if it involved a life or death situation; this was clearly not in that category. Jesus certainly knew that from the start, and probably was even looking for someone like this woman to heal that day in order to make his point!

13:15 **lead him away to watering.** The Jews had gone to elaborate lengths to be able to care for their animals without violating their Sabbath traditions. Animals could go out on the Sabbath but not carry burdens. Usually knots could not be tied or untied, but this was allowed with animals to control them. Since watering animals might result in walking more than the allowed steps from home (2,000 cubits, or about 6/10 of a mile), they would build a crude structure next to the well and call it a ‘home.’ Thus they could take their animals there, water them, and return without ever leaving ‘home.’

13:17 **his adversaries were ashamed.** Or, 'his opponents were humiliated'. The people cheered him, perhaps because he had bested the ruler but more likely because he had championed and helped one of them. Jesus won the debate.

The parable of the mustard seed – Luke 13:18-19 (Matt 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32)

See Mark.

13:19 **a great tree.** Mustard plants grew from three to ten feet tall, not a tree like a cedar or pine, but a large bush very capable of being used by birds.

The parable of the leaven – Luke 13:20-21 (Matt 13:33)

13:21 **three measures of meal.** This was wheat flour, to which the leaven (part of the previous day's risen dough) was added to make that day's bread. The amount is large—three *sata*, about nine gallons or sixty pounds of flour. Like the mustard seed parable, this shows the contrast of a small thing (a handful of leaven) becoming a large thing (a huge amount of bread dough) over time.

The narrow door – Luke 13:22-30 (Matt 7:13-14, 22-23)

13:22 **toward Jerusalem.** Lest we forget, Luke reminds us that Jesus was on his final journey to Jerusalem.

13:23 **are there few that be saved?** This was a hot point of controversy. Some believed, reading Isaiah 60:21, that all Jews would be saved. Others felt that only those who disagreed with the rabbis would not (among the Jews, that is; Gentiles were usually considered unsaved). Jesus made it clear that proper actions ("the strait gate," v. 24) are critical to salvation.

13:24 **strait gate.** "Strait", of course, means narrow. "Gate" can mean a gate going into a city or a door into a building. The concept is that while the entrance might be narrow, once through, it opens into a broad place of blessings. The narrowness doesn't symbolize the difficulty of gaining salvation as much as the exclusivity of going through Jesus himself.

The JST explains with an addition at the end of the verse why many will not be able to get in the gate/door: "**for the Lord shall not always strive with man.**" This concept ties nicely in with the next verse where the door is shut.

13:25 **JST**

Luke 13:25 KJV	JST
When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:	Therefore , when once the Lord of the kingdom is risen up, and hath shut the door of the kingdom , then ye shall stand without, and knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; but the Lord shall answer and say unto you, I will not receive you, for ye know not from whence ye are.

In verse 24, the door was open and the invitation extended; now the master has shut it, and the time for change is gone. A similar change as the large part of this verse is also made in the JST for v. 27. Those final words come from Psalm 6:8.

13:28 **you yourselves thrust out.** Though these wicked, who claim to have shared meals with Jesus and heard him teach in the streets (v. 26), will see their progenitors and other prophets in God's kingdom, they will be pushed out because of their sins.

13:29 **shall sit down in the kingdom of God.** Not to sit on a chair or the floor but to 'recline' on pillows or a mattress in front of a sumptuous feast.

13:30 **first which shall be last.** This is an eschatological reversal, where the suffering righteous receive a great reward and those who enjoyed privilege, wealth, or other earthly blessings in this life suffer in the next.

A warning to Herod – Luke 13:31-33

13:32 **Go ye, and tell that fox.** This was Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee and Perea, showing that Jesus was probably in Perea now. Today we think of a fox as sly and cunning, and so did they, but in that day it also meant unremarkable and insignificant, someone without power. He was saying that Herod could be ignored in the context of Jesus' mission. The JST removes the animal reference and just uses his name: "Go ye, and tell **Herod.**"

13:33 **JST**

Luke 13:33 KJV	JST
Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the <i>day following</i> : for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.	Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the third day: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. This he spake, signifying of his death.

The footnote in the LDS KJV shows the sentence added to the end of the verse, but it makes a bit more sense if you have the other change in that verse, "the **third** day," which echoes Jesus' words in v. 32. The slight change in wording draws our attention to his crucifixion and resurrection on the third day.

Lament over Jerusalem – Luke 13:34-35

13:34 **O Jerusalem, Jerusalem.** The JST adds to the beginning of this verse, "**And in this very hour, he began to weep over Jerusalem, saying,** O Jerusalem, Jerusalem..." Jesus wept for the very people who will kill him and who will reject his apostles and his church, but who will also, in about forty years, be destroyed by the Romans, not to return to their city for almost 2,000 years.

13:35 **JST**

Luke 13:35 KJV	JST
Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until <i>the time</i> come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.	Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not know me, until ye have received from the hand of the Lord a just recompense for all your sins; until <i>the time</i> come when ye shall say, Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord.

This ties in wonderfully with Zechariah 13:6 – "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." Only at that day will the Jews know Jesus, their Messiah. This is made even clearer in modern revelation: " And then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet? *Then shall they know that I am the Lord;* for I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God. And then shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king" (D&C 45:51-53, italics added).

Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath – Luke 14:1-6

14:1 **into the house of one of the chief Pharisees.** This is the setting for most of chapter 14, a Sabbath day meal.

14:2 **dropsy.** Today called edema, this symptom is an excessive buildup of fluids resulting in swelling. It's unlikely such a man would be invited to the dinner, so it's not clear what he was doing there. Perhaps he was a 'plant' by the Pharisees to see what Jesus would do?

14:3 **Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?** A recurring theme of Jesus' ministry; he was challenged on it many times and he always demonstrated that the mercy of God was greater than the little rules set up over the years to build a fence around Sabbath day observance.

14:4 **they held their peace.** This wonderful phrase was invented by William Tyndale, among scores of others that he coined when he first translated the New Testament into English. The Greek is simply 'they kept quiet.' More

importantly, the other dinner guests didn't answer his question, perhaps because they were afraid to take Jesus on after the last time he humiliated his opponents.

14:5 **will not straightway pull him out.** If a precious animal fell into a pit on the Sabbath, Jesus pointed out that none of them would hesitate to rescue it. By implication, then, a person was of more worth than an animal.

On Humility – Luke 14:7-14

14:7 **he put forth a parable.** Noting how they all jockeyed for position at the meal (seeking out “the chief rooms,” meaning the best seats), Jesus gave a *targum* or oral commentary on Proverbs 25:6-7 (as he would have done in the synagogue, since it was the Sabbath): “Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.”

14:8 **sit not down in the highest room.** Where you sat at a meal like this was determined by your status in society. In some cases, the food that you were served was dictated by your seating, those nearest the host getting the better food. There are examples in Greek and Roman literature of the host giving himself better food than the guests, in order to exalt himself. Jesus wanted his disciples to serve and give glory to others, letting God do the exalting (vv. 10-11).

14:12 **a dinner or a supper.** Greek *ariston*, a late morning meal, and *deipnon*, a late afternoon meal.

14:13 **a feast.** In Greek, a *doxē* or formal dinner party, and even more significant invitation than the other two normal daily meals. His hearers would likely never consider associating with such social outcasts, much less inviting them to a formal party. Would we?

The parable of the wedding feast – Luke 14:15-24 (Matt 22:1-14)

See also Matthew. Luke's version doesn't have death and violence like Matthew's, but makes a similar point.

14:15 **Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.** The unnamed commentator appears to be offering a positive honor challenge—giving Jesus a ‘sideways’ complement and expecting a similar complement in return. Jesus did not follow the pattern and instead gave a parable teaching about obedience and judgment.

14:17 **them that were bidden.** This is not a last-minute invitation. The guests had been previously invited and accepted (v. 16). The servant was simply going to each of them to let them know the feast was ready.

14:18 **they all with on consent began to make excuse.** All the excuses were lame and to Jesus' audience clearly insulting to the host.⁴ Even the last (“I have married a wife,” v. 20) doesn't indicate he *just* got married, but is likely in the first year of marriage.

14:21 **Go out quickly into the streets.** The call went out first to the downtrodden in the village itself, then when there was still more food (v. 22), to those outside the town who were traveling on the roads (v. 23). The symbolism here is that the gospel was first offered to the Jewish leaders but they didn't accept it (v. 24). So it was offered to the outcasts of Jewish society. Finally, it was offered to the Gentiles.⁵

The cost of discipleship – Luke 14:25-35 (Matt 10:37-38; 5:13; Mark 9:49-50)

Leaving the Pharisee's home, Jesus went out teaching among the people again (v. 25), telling them explicitly what it took to be his disciple, his follower and learner.

14:26 **hate not his father.** Not literally hate but in comparison to how much they love the Lord.

⁴ There is a resemblance to Deuteronomy 20:5-8, which are excuses to avoid fighting in a war, certainly not the case here.

⁵ The list of people invited has a resemblance to a list of things that excuse priests from serving in the temple in Leviticus 21:16-24.

Luke 14:26 KJV	JST
If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.	If any one come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, or husband , yea, and their own life also, or in other words, is afraid to lay down their life for my sake , cannot be my disciple.

This addition nicely clarifies the meaning of hating our own lives. The JST also adds “**or husband**” at the end of the list, showing the inclusion of female disciples.

14:30 The JST adds at the end of verse, “**And this he said, signifying there should not any man follow him, unless he was able to continue.**” We are to count the cost of discipleship before making the commitment, lest we keep partway into it and become inclined to quit because it is too hard.

14:33 The JST has a lengthy addition at the end of this verse: “**Then certain of them came to him, saying, Good master, we have Moses and the prophets, and whosoever shall live by them, shall he not have life? And Jesus answered, saying, Ye know not Moses, neither the prophets, for if ye had known them ye would have believed on me; for to this intent they were written. For I am sent that ye might have life.**”

The parable of the lost sheep – Luke 15:1-7 (Matt 18:12-14)

This chapter contains three parables about things that were lost and then found. Notice the setting for the delivery of the parables in verses 1 and 2, with publicans and sinners gathering to hear him, and Pharisees and scribes complaining about it. The Jewish leaders were disgusted that Jesus would freely associate with the lower levels of society.

15:4 **hundred sheep.** A standard size herd for a shepherd of modest means.

15:4 **leave the ninety and nine.** Shepherds didn’t work alone, so he was leaving his sheep in the care of others while he searched for the lost one.

15:5 **layeth it on his shoulders.** This imagery is found in Psalm 28:9 and Isaiah 40:11, where God carries his people.

15:6 **when he cometh home.** The shepherd persisted and delayed his return home until he found the lost one.

15:7 **joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.** So to create joy in heaven, should we all sin and repent, rather than staying faithful? No, that is not the message. We are all lost sheep and all need a loving shepherd to come get us.

The parable of the lost coin – Luke 15:8-10

15:8 **having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one.** This is a *drachma* or a day’s wages, and perhaps the woman’s dowry received on her wedding day, making it all the more important to her.

15:8 **light a candle, and sweep.** Sometimes we have the image of the coin getting lost in a crack in the floor or something, but most had dirt floors. The house is very dark, so she lights a lamp to help her see, then sweeps the floor hoping the coin is just under the topmost layer of dirt.

15:10 **there is joy in the presence of angels.** In this one, the comparison to those who “need no repentance” is not made, just an exclamation of joy among the angels for one who repents.

The parable of the prodigal sons – Luke 15:11-32

Perhaps the most well-known of all of Luke’s unique parables, this classic tale is full of layers of meaning, to be explored after the analysis.

15:12 **give me the portion.** For a son, especially a younger son, to ask for his inheritance before the death of the father would be quite an insult. It is as if he were saying, ‘Father, I want you dead.’

15:12 **divided unto them.** The father’s reaction is not stern or rebuking, though, just humble, doing exactly what the son asked. Notice that both sons get their inheritance early as a result of the younger son’s request, though the father retains control over the older son’s portion, as would be appropriate. That the younger son got control over his is extraordinary. The father would have been required to sell property—land, animals, etc.—to meet the son’s request. It may have taken weeks to raise the required amount.

15:13 **far country.** In other words, among Gentiles.

15:13 **wasted his substance.** Literally, ‘scattered his possessions’, like scattering wheat seed to plant it.

15:13 **riotous living.** Greek *asōstōs*, meaning, ‘immoral and reckless.’

15:14 **he began to be in want.** With his fortune wasted and a famine setting in (which would raise the price of food dramatically), the young man was in trouble and could not even feed himself.

15:15 **to feed swine.** A despicable job for a Jew, since pigs were unclean animals.

15:16 **would fain have filled.** ‘Longed to fill,’ meaning he was so hungry that he longed after pig’s food.

15:16 **husks.** Greek *keration* or carob pods, eaten by pigs and the poorest people. (Ironically, carob-based bars are considered an important and somewhat expensive health food today.) Eating with the pigs would be far more humiliating than the nature of his diet.

15:17 **when he came to himself.** “But when he came to his senses” (NASB). One day the young man ‘woke up’ and realized what a terrible state he had got himself into.

15:18 **I have sinned against heaven, and before thee.** The son’s humility came through, recognizing his own sins before God and his own father.

15:19 **am no more worthy to be called thy son.** The second half of his planned ‘speech’ to his father included an admission that his sins had serious consequences. Though he had dishonored his father and family, he hoped that he could return as a one of the “hired servants” and at least be on the edge of the household.

15:20 **when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him.** The indication is that the father was watching. Perhaps he had heard of his son’s difficulties, or just surmised that the famine in the land where he went would impact him. Perhaps he just missed him greatly and longed for him to come home and sat watching each day.

15:20 **had compassion, and ran.** Running in a tunic and robes was not only difficult, but normally degrading. A man always walked in a dignified manner. The father was so happy to see his son, he didn’t care about any humiliation such activity might bring him; his compassion for his son carried him quickly down the road.

15:21 **am no more worthy to be called thy son.** Some believe that the son stopped short of asking to be a servant, and perhaps he did when he saw his father’s reaction. I like to think that the father cut him off and immediately countered what the son started to say when he raised the question of his worthiness to be a son with the warmest welcome the father could offer.

15:22 **the best robe . . . a ring . . . shoes.** The father was honoring the returned son with his own possessions.

15:23 **fatted calf.** The slaying of this animal shows that it was not just a feast for the family, but for a large crowd. The father was reconciling his son to the entire community.

15:24 **was dead, and is alive again.** The father’s justification for the feast was the return of a son that he and all considered ‘dead’ to the family and community, because of his choice to take his inheritance early and leave them.

15:25 **his elder son**. The oldest son, who had stayed behind, was busy working to continue to prosper the family. That he came home late in the evening showed his dedication to the family.

15:26 **he called one of the servants**. Perhaps he was cleaning up before heading into the house, or perhaps he sensed something might be happening and asked the servant instead of just heading into the house itself. There were probably not many feasts held since the errant son had left.

15:27 **Thy brother is come**. This news angered the older son (v. 28). Notice that the servant calls him “thy brother,” but shortly the older brother will not wish to use that same designation.

15:27 **safe and sound**. Another great Tyndale phrase that is a persistent part of our modern vocabulary and is used in almost every Bible translation of this verse. The Greek just means ‘healthy,’ indicating the son has returned home without injury or illness.

15:28 **therefore came his father out**. Just as the father met the prodigal son on the way home, so we went out to meet the older, faithful son on his own terms.

15:28 **entreated him**. Greek *parakaleō*, with multiple meanings, including to console, comfort, or cheer up, but also admonish, exhort, urge, even beg. It appears that the father used every appeal at his disposal to help the son see the reason for the celebration.

15:29 **these many years do I serve thee**. While the other son had run off with his inheritance, having a big impact on the whole family’s finances and prospects, the older son had stayed home, managed the farm, worked hard, and made the best of everything. His service brought honor to his father and to himself. Note that the older son does not claim that he loves his father better than the younger son—in fact, he doesn’t mention love at all, just faithfulness to duty.

15:29 **thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry**. It is likely that finances were very tight after the younger son’s departure, so there was no opportunity for the older son to host a feast or celebration with his friends, as the father was now doing.

15:30 **this thy son**. Not ‘my brother.’ The older son is invoking Deuteronomy 21:18-21, a condemnation of wicked sons. He was saying that the younger son should be stoned for his rebelliousness, not given a great celebration.

15:31 **thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine**. Nothing had changed in terms of the oldest son’s inheritance. The return of the younger son didn’t diminish in any way that he would receive all that was left of the father’s estate, when that time came.

15:32 **It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad**. Repeating the justification for throwing the party in the first place (v. 24), which the older son had not heard, the father explained that the return of one such as this merited a great celebration. For all intents and purposes, the younger son had indeed been dead to the family, and now he was miraculously returned, alive and well. He had been lost to all the father’s hopes and dreams for him, and now again he is found, humble, teachable, and totally dependent on the father.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught in a conference address that this is a story of *two* lost sons, not one (see Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Other Prodigal,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 62). They both have parallel journeys home, but with different results.

[The older] son is not so much angry that the other has come home as he is angry that his parents are so happy about it. Feeling unappreciated and perhaps more than a little self-pity, this dutiful son—and he is wonderfully dutiful—forgets for a moment that he has never had to know filth or despair, fear or self-loathing. He forgets for a moment that every calf on the ranch is already his and so are all the robes in the closet and every ring in the drawer. He forgets for a moment that his faithfulness has been and always will be rewarded.

No, he who has virtually everything, and who has in his hardworking, wonderful way earned it, lacks the one thing that might make him the complete man of the Lord he nearly is. He has yet to come to the compassion and

mercy, the charitable breadth of vision to see that this is not a rival returning. It is his brother. As his father pled with him to see, it is one who was dead and now is alive. It is one who was lost and now is found.

Certainly this younger brother had been a prisoner—a prisoner of sin, stupidity, and a pigsty. But the older brother lives in some confinement, too. He has, as yet, been unable to break out of the prison of himself. He is haunted by the green-eyed monster of jealousy. . . .

How can we overcome such a tendency so common in almost everyone? For one thing, we can do as these two sons did and start making our way back to the Father. We should do so with as much haste and humility as we can summon. Along the way we can count our many blessings and we can applaud the accomplishments of others. Best of all, we can serve others, the finest exercise for the heart ever prescribed. But finally these will not be enough. When we are lost, we can “come to ourselves,” but we may not always be able to “find ourselves,” and, worlds without end, we cannot “save ourselves.” Only the Father and His Only Begotten Son can do that. Salvation is in Them only. So we pray that They will help us, that They will “come out” to meet and embrace us and bring us into the feast They have prepared.

Bibliography

Abbreviations:

- AT – Author’s translation
- BYU – BYU New Rendition
- CJB – Complete Jewish Bible
- ESV – English Standard Version
- JST – Joseph Smith Translation
- KJV – King James Version
- LXX – Septuagint (Greek Old Testament)
- NASB – New American Standard Bible
- NIV – New International Version
- NJB – New Jerusalem Bible
- NLT – New Living Translation
- NRSV – New Revised Standard Version

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