



“Certainly this was a
righteous man”

Luke 22-24

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Introduction

These chapters include the passion and resurrection narratives of Luke. While the stories in the four gospels are fundamentally the same, Luke preserves many unique items about these days, which are called out in the text below. Luke portrays Jesus’ patience in suffering even as he skips over some of the more gruesome details in the other gospels, such as the scourging and some of the mocking. He describes the Atonement in the garden in great detail and portrays Jesus’ agony on the cross in clear but mercifully short terms. Luke uniquely describes a visit to Herod, also in Jerusalem for the feast, and writes powerfully about Pilate’s struggle to release this innocent man. Luke also shares unique resurrection experiences and prepares us for Part II of his story of the early Church, the book of Acts, with the concluding ascension narrative.

Outline of Luke

An overall outline for the book of Luke is as follows, with the section(s) covered in this lesson, in whole or in part, 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

Last Supper, Passion, Death, and Burial (22:1 – 23:56)

The plot to kill Jesus – **Luke 22:1-6** (Matt 26:1-5; **Mark 14:1-2**)

See also Mark.

22:1 **the feast of unleavened bread . . . the Passover**. Luke lets us know the timing of the next events, telling us it was “the feast of unleavened bread” which he equates with “the Passover.” Though scripturally, the two were coinciding but not equivalent,² by Jesus’ time, they had become merged together into a single week-long celebration of Israel’s freedom from bondage in Egypt and the blessing of a good winter barley harvest. The date of the Passover is 15 Nisan, which is typically the first full moon after the vernal equinox,³ putting it usually in our months of March or April. In this case, it was Thursday, with the Passover meal to begin at sunset (which is Friday

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).

² See Leviticus 23:5-8; Exodus 12:1-20; Deuteronomy 16:2-6.

³ Sometimes due to calendar differences, it is the second full moon after the equinox.

by their reckoning). Families would be busy preparing for the Passover meal that evening, cleansing the house of leaven and getting the tables and food ready.

22:2 **the chief priest and the scribes.** All the gospels relate how the “chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill” Jesus. However, they are reluctant to act for fear of how the people might react, such as those who welcomed him into the city with cheers and palm branches in the triumphal entry.

22:3 **entered Satan into Judas.** Luke solely tells us that Satan entered into Judas, which could be a literal possession by the devil or a way of describing how someone so close to Jesus could enact such an incomprehensible betrayal. Accordingly, Judas met with Jewish leaders (v. 4) and negotiated for an undisclosed sum of money (v. 5, though specified as thirty pieces of silver in Matthew 26:15) to betray Jesus to them when it could be done away from the notice of the crowds (v. 6).

Preparation for the Passover – Luke 22:7-13 (Matt 26:17-20; Mark 14:12-17)

22:7 **when the Passover must be killed.** One of the important preparations was to kill the lamb (or goat kid) that was part of the feast. Because of huge crowds, the temple would be thronged with men bringing male one-year-old lambs or kids to the priests and Levites, who staffed the courtyard by the hundreds at this time of year—all twenty-four courses of priests were present, supported by many Levites. Working swiftly, the offerant or a Levite cut the lamb’s throat while another Levite captured some of the blood in a cup and, in a human line crossing the Court of the Priests, passed it to a priest at the altar for sprinkling there. Certain entrails and fat were taken by the priests as a sacrifice, but most of the skinned lamb was given to the man who brought it, and carried on his shoulders back to the home, room, or tent where his family group was gathered, where it was cooked on a spit.

22:8 **he sent Peter and John.** Jesus asked Peter and John (unique to Luke) to take charge of the preparations for their group, which would have included the Twelve, other disciples, and their families—a large crowd. They were tasked with finding the necessary lambs and taking them to the temple for sacrifice.

22:9 **Where wilt thou that we prepare?** Their question to Jesus was basically, “Where do we take the lambs after the temple ritual?” His instruction was to find a man bearing a pitcher (a large clay jar) of water on his head and follow him back to the house where they would celebrate the feast (v. 10). This might sound like an impossible task, given the thousands in the city at Passover time, but carrying water was women’s work, so seeing a many carrying a jar of water on his head would be an unusual site.⁴

22:11 **Where is the guestchamber.** Jesus further instructed Peter and John to enter the house and ask about using “the guestchamber” for the Passover.⁵ Simply by using the name “the Master” (meaning “Teacher”) the homeowner would know who it was and freely offer the room, which is exactly what happened (v. 13). This demonstrates that the homeowner was a disciple of Jesus.

22:12 **a large upper room furnished.** Instead of the requested “guestchamber,” the disciples were shown “a large upper room furnished.” The “upper room” would have been the rooftop, though perhaps with temporary walls and a roof made of branches. The traditional site for this room (the same room where Jesus appeared to his apostles after his resurrection) is marked today by the Crusader Church of Saint Mary on Mount Zion. This site was revered since the first century as the location of the upper room. Many scholars think this home was the residence of John Mark, who wrote the gospel of Mark and who figures in Acts and Paul’s letters.

Jesus instructed the disciples to ask for the *kataluma*, the guest room (v. 11), but told them that instead they would be granted use of the *anōgeon*, the space on the rooftop. Luke notes that it was “furnished,” meaning ready for the meal. Perhaps the family in the house had expected Passover guests that did not arrive, or came in fewer numbers

⁴ Some have speculated that the man might be an Essene, since many of them lived celibate and thus would not have had a woman to carry the water, but that cannot be confirmed from the text.

⁵ The word used for “guestchamber” (Greek *kataluma*) is the same one used in Luke 2:7 where Joseph and Mary could find no room.

than expected. Some believe that Jesus may have pre-arranged the location with the owner but not told the disciples so that Judas would not know beforehand where they would be.

The Sacrament – Luke 22:14-23 (Matt 26:21-29; Mark 14:18-25; John 13:21-30)

While never referred to as the “last supper” in scripture, we call it that because it was the last meal that Jesus enjoyed in mortality. Because the Passover meal started at sunset, we know it was now Friday, 15 Nisan in the Jewish calendar (Thursday night in ours). It was also the last day of Jesus’ mortal life. In less than twenty-four hours, he will be lying in the tomb.

A word about the chronological differences between the synoptic gospels and John. All four gospels agree that Jesus was crucified and died on Friday, just before the Sabbath (which began at sunset Friday evening). Matthew, Mark, and Luke are clear that Friday was the Passover feast, while John tells us that Jesus was crucified on the day before Passover, even while the lambs were being slain in the temple. While many have tried to harmonize this difference, there simply is no way to shift stories and times around to truly resolve this difference. For the synoptics, the last supper is a Paschal meal. For John, it’s Jesus’ merely last mortal meal. One day we might be able to ask John and the others and sort this one out, but for now, we will let the independent witnesses stand as they are. Except for the difference of what day was the start of Passover, the four evangelists are generally in harmony.

22:14 **the twelve apostles with him.** Jesus sat down for the meal after sunset with “the twelve apostles,” a phrase used infrequently in the gospels.⁶ This does not mean that they were the only ones in attendance. Passover was a family meal and the apostles’ families along with Jesus’ other disciples and their families may have been present.

22:15 **With desire I have desired to eat this passover.** The Greek word for “desire” is equivalent to the English term. The repetition emphasizes the great longing Jesus had in anticipation of this meal.

22:16 **JST**

Luke 22:16 KJV	JST
For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.	For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled which is written in the prophets concerning me. Then I will partake with you in the kingdom of God.

Jesus stated that he would not eat it (the Passover) again “until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” The JST clarifies that “it” equals the words of the prophets concerning him, and that what will happen in the kingdom of God is Jesus partaking of a meal with the disciples, which alludes to the great Messianic banquet spoken of in passages such as Revelation 19:9 and D&C 58:11.

22:17 **took the cup, and gave thanks.** This is not the sacrament, which is portrayed in verses 19-20 in Luke, but rather one of the four ritual cups of wine that are part of the Passover ceremony. It was probably the second cup, which followed the explanation of the Passover meal and singing of the beginning of the *Hallel* (Psalm 113-118) and preceded the food. It was likely the third cup that was associated with the sacrament. With this (second) cup, Jesus taught that he would not drink of wine again until “the kingdom of God shall come.”

22:19 **took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it.** Next, Jesus broke bread and gave it to them, a part of the Passover ritual. But he took the symbols of that meal and turned them into a new ritual. Luke records that Jesus said, “This is my body which is given for you.” Lest they misunderstand, he said it was an act of “remembrance” for them to do this.

⁶ Only here, Matthew 10:2 and Revelation 21:14, though nine times in 1 Nephi 11-14.

22:20 ***This cup is the new testament of my blood.*** Then he took another of the wine cups of the meal (perhaps the third, as explained above) and said it was a symbol of his blood, “which is shed for you.” Luke alone uses the language that the wine as “the new testament,” meaning a new covenant superseding the Passover.⁷

22:21 ***him that betrayeth me is with me.*** After the sacramental ritual, Jesus declared that the person who would betray him was at that very table,⁸ but proclaimed “woe unto that man” (v. 22). This caused the disciples to speculate about who the betrayer might be (v. 23).

The request of James and John – Luke 22:24-30 (Matt 20:24-28; Mark 10:41-45)

Luke’s account of this at the Last Supper is unique; Matthew and Mark have an account of a similar conversation, but it happens earlier in Jesus’ ministry and in different circumstances.

22:24 ***a strife among them.*** Sometime during the events of this evening—and it seems to fit here just after Judas left—an old discussion returned: who is the greatest? Once again, Jesus taught them that “I am among you as he that serveth” (v. 27).

22:26 ***he that is chief, as he that doeth serve.*** Interestingly, the Greek word for “serve” is *diakoneō*, which also means ‘to be a deacon.’ To use today’s Church vocabulary, you could (with much liberty) translate this phrase, ‘You, the prophets and the apostles of my Church, must be as humble as the youngest deacon.’⁹ “Apostle” also means ‘one who is sent,’ often a trusted slave sent to perform a task on behalf of the master with his full authority. Thus the names for the highest and the lowest priesthood offices in the Church today both come from words whose origins lie in service, demonstrating the very definition of priesthood.

22:27 ***For whether is greater.*** To paraphrase: ‘Here I sit in the place of honor at the feast, a place that men would say gives me the greatest honor. But I serve you. If you want to be the most important one here, serve others as would a slave. The blessings you’ll receive for such unselfish action will be huge.’

22:28 ***continued with me in my temptations.*** Or, “stood by me in my trials” (NRSV, NASB, NIV). Jesus’ closest disciples have remained with him, even when faced with challenges from Jewish leaders, attempts to stone him, and rejection by other friends and family.

22:29 ***I appoint unto you a kingdom.*** Or, ‘I covenant with you.’ Jesus has received by covenant a kingdom from his Father. Even so, he covenants with his disciples to give them a kingdom in the same way, inviting them to dine at his table to judge upon thrones he provides (v. 30).

Peter’s denial foretold – Luke 22:31-38 (Matt 26:30-35; Mark 14:27-31; John 13:36-38)

22:31 ***that he may sift you as wheat.*** The JST changes the “sift you as wheat” to “sift **the children of the kingdom** as wheat.” Though this “you” in this phrase is not in the Greek, it is implied by the preceding “you,” which is a plural pronoun, indicating that Jesus was speaking to more than Peter himself. The JST clarification of who “you” is thus fits the underlying Greek text wonderfully, though an English reader would have no indication of it.

22:32 ***when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*** “Converted” is *epistrephō*, meaning ‘turn to’ or ‘return,’ likely reflecting the Hebrew/Aramaic term for “repent.” Jesus was saying, in essence, ‘Peter, after you sin, repent and return to me; then, strengthen [make stable and firm] your brethren.’

22:33 ***Lord, I am ready to go with thee.*** Peter’s affirmation was a strong reaction to Jesus’ statement that he would need to repent. The JST adds, “And he said unto him, **being aggrieved**, Lord, I am ready . . .” emphasizing Peter’s

⁷ Paul uses similar language in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25, which might be the oldest written account of the Last Supper.

⁸ This means, of course, that there were other tables—and thus other people—in the room, or the pronouncement would have been meaningless.

⁹ To be clear, Jesus was not talking about the priesthood office of deacon. He was using the word in the sense of a servant. But the comparison is apt in the Church today.

distress. Though on this night he will struggle with this attitude, Peter will prove true to his word, going to prison at least three times (see Acts 4:3; 5:18; 12:1-19) and, by tradition, to his death in Rome, all for Jesus.

22:34 **thrice deny that thou knowest me.** Only after forewarning of Peter's sin and letting him emphatically deny it does Jesus give him the exact mistake he will make. Notice that in Luke the nature of Peter's denial is clear—it is not denying his testimony of the truth or denying his calling and ordination, but denying that he and Jesus are acquainted, "that thou knowest me." This is also the meaning of "deny" (*aparneomai*), 'to affirm that one has no acquaintance.'

22:36 **But now.** In three verses unique to Luke (36-38), Jesus asked if they had lacked for anything when he went them out without money or possessions, and they said no (v. 35). He here rescinded that command and tells them to take what they need when they travel, including a sword to protect themselves.

22:37 **reckoned among the transgressors.** From Isaiah 53:12 ("he was numbered with the transgressors"), meaning that Jesus was considered a criminal among other criminals.

22:38 **two swords . . . It is enough.** Peter had one (see John 18:10). Perhaps Simon Zelotes (Luke 6:15) had the other since he was probably a Zealot, a group who was known to carry weapons. Some commentators see in Jesus' response a negative, as in 'Enough of this talk.' But since he just counseled them in verse 36 to sell extra clothing to buy swords, an inventory and acknowledgement seems to be the correct interpretation: he told them to get swords and they asked if two was enough this night, to which Jesus agreed.

Jesus prays in Gethsemane – Luke 22:39-46 (Matt 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; John 18:1)

Though much of the message of Gethsemane is in three or even four gospels, the information below is unique to Luke.

22:41 **he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast.** Luke does not single out Peter, James and John in the account, but has Jesus leave all the disciples behind while he goes off to pray. He also only goes off to pray once, unlike Matthew and Mark who have him leave and return three times.

22:43 **there appeared an angel.** We don't know who this was, but some logical candidates are Gabriel who appeared to Mary and Zacharias, and Michael, who was Adam. There is some poetry in the latter, so that the 'first Adam' is comforting the 'last Adam.'

22:44 **being in an agony he prayed more earnestly.** The Atonement was progressive, represented by the three visits back to the chief apostles in Matthew and this concept in Luke. His prayer grew in intensity to match that of his suffering, as many of us experience as we face challenges and problems.

22:44 **his sweat was as it were great drops of blood.** Interpreting the Greek, some believe that "as it were" means sweat like blood, or thick as blood. But modern revelation confirms what happened: "Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit" (D&C 19:18). Called *hematodrosis*, this condition exists when under extreme duress capillaries burst, producing a bloody sweat. What Jesus experienced was surely the most severe case ever. The JST changes it subtly with this concept: "...and his he sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

This suffering apparently went on for several hours, soaking his clothing with blood, draining him of physical strength. Joseph Fielding Smith noted: "A great many people have an idea that when he was on the cross, and nails were driven into his hands and feet, that was his great suffering. His great suffering was before he was ever placed on the cross. It was in the Garden of Gethsemane that the blood oozed from the pores of his body" (*Doctrines of Salvation* 1:130).

That this suffering happened in a place called Gethsemane is apt. To make olive oil, olives are pressed under extreme weights—large stones—to squeeze out the precious liquid. Likewise, Jesus was pressed down by an enormous weight—our sins—which squeezed blood from his very pores.

It is interesting to note that verses 43-44 are missing in many significant Greek manuscripts, though some early ones include them. The contradicting evidence means that scholars can't be certain if they were in the original or not. Mosiah 3:7 and D&C 19:16-19 would seem to weigh in favor of their presence.

22:45 ***sleeping for sorrow***. Meaning, the disciples were exhausted from the grief they were experiencing. Luke alone gives this thought, that the disciples somehow shared in the sorrow that Jesus was feeling. But unlike Jesus, who endured it with the support of an angel, the disciples were overcome and feel asleep. Jesus woke them up, telling them to get up and pray that they might avoid temptation.

[The arrest – Luke 22:47-53 \(Matthew 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-52; John 18:2-12\)](#)

See Matthew, with some comments below about Luke.

22:47 ***drew near unto Jesus to kiss him***. In both Matthew and Mark, Judas kissed Jesus to identify him. In Luke, as he draws close to do the deed, Jesus stops him with a question about what Judas is doing (v. 48).

22:49 ***shall we smite with the sword?*** In Luke only, the disciples see the arresting party and ask Jesus if it was time to fight?

22:51 ***he touched his ear, and healed him***. In the KJV, only Luke mentions Jesus healing the servant's ear. But in the JST, that aspect of the story also comes out in Mark (see JST Mark 14:47). The view that many scholars have of the influence of Mark on Luke has them conclude that Luke here wrote this because he focused on Jesus the healer, with many going so far as to conclude that Luke made this up. The change in Mark not only strengthens the tie between Luke and Mark but does it in a way that adds a second witness to this healing.

22:52 ***the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders***. Only Luke suggests that the chief priests themselves came to arrest Jesus, along with the temple officers and some of the elders (leaders) of the people.

[Jesus interrogated – Luke 22:54-71 \(Matt 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65; John 1:13-24\)](#)

See also Mark.

22:55 ***when they had kindled a fire***. Mark and John both mention a fire but Luke uniquely speaks of the fire being started. It's not clear who started it but Peter did not immediately fear being identified as he joined them around the fire in the middle of the high priest's courtyard, so it wasn't probably too many from the arresting party. His anonymity doesn't last, of course.

22:61 ***the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter***. Only Luke mentions this brief eye contact between Jesus and Peter, at precisely the moment when the rooster crowed to remind Peter of his declaration of standing boldly with Jesus, even unto death.

22:65 ***blasphemously spake they against him***. Only Luke notes that *they* blasphemously spake against *him*, whereas Matthew and Mark say that blasphemy was the thing of which he was found guilty. The irony is not lost on us today. The Greek *blasphēmeō* can also mean to slander, defame, or insult.

22:66 ***as soon as it was day***. Luke's account of a morning trial seems to be not a separate event but a summary of what Jesus has already experienced as recorded in the other gospels. That the chronology is different is not troubling; Luke merely discusses the meeting at the time of its conclusion, while the other three record it at the beginning time.

22:66 ***led him into their council***. "Council" is Greek *sunedrion*, or sanhedrin. It does mean 'council,' and many towns throughout the land had them. The one in Jerusalem was the chief Sanhedrin because it consisted of the "elders," "chief priests," and "scribes" in the capital city.

22:67 ***Art thou the Christ?*** 'Are you the Messiah, long spoken of by the prophets, who will valiantly lead our people to freedom?' They did not ask that they might join him or support him, but to get him to say 'yes' so they could take

him to Pilate under the charge of sedition. Nor did they even understand their own question, seeing it as a political one only.

22:67-68 ***If I tell you, ye will not believe: And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me.*** Luke singly provides this comment from Jesus, that there was no point discussing anything with the Jewish leaders, since they would listen to nothing that he said. Jesus declared his identity anyway (vv. 69-70) but this gives us a sense of his expectations of what was going to happen.

22:70 ***Art thou then the Son of God?*** Unable to get him to admit to a claim of being the Messiah, they asked him about the other identity he claimed for himself. In this case, he boldly declared it was as they had said.

22:70 ***Ye say that I am.*** Translations vary on their interpretation of this phrase. The Greek literally says, 'You speak because I am.' Interpreting this, the NASB simply says, "Yes, I am." But that it uncharacteristically non-literal for that translation. Others say, "You are right in saying I am" (NIV) which affirms that he is, or "It is you who say I am" (NJB), without affirmation but putting the statement in their own mouths. However it is viewed, Jesus was not denying the truth of the statement but was likely wanting to make this more difficult for the council.

22:71 ***heard of his own mouth.*** Though he had not actually confessed to any crime, in their anxiousness to move this process along before the Passover day went on, they determined to use these comments as a confession. However, they dismissed the need of other witnesses, though it was apparently contrary to their law to convict a man solely on his own confession.

[Jesus before Pilate – Luke 23:1-5 \(Matt 27:1-2, 11-14; Mark 15:1-5; John 18:28-38\)](#)

See John, with some comments below about Luke.

23:1 ***the whole multitude of them arose.*** Luke uniquely provides this image of the entire Sanhedrin (or at least, those who came to the questioning), heading to Antonia Fortress to deliver Jesus to Pilate.

23:2 ***perverting the nation.*** According to Luke alone, before Pilate, the Jewish leaders changed their charges from blasphemy to subversion and refusal to pay taxes, because Pilate would simply send it back to them if blasphemy were the only charge.

[Jesus before Herod Antipas – Luke 23:6-12](#)

Only Luke records Jesus being taken to Herod Antipas, who has the distinction of the one leader that never heard Jesus' voice, even though they were in same room and Herod asked him questions.

23:7 ***he sent him to Herod.*** Pilate, hearing that Jesus was from Galilee, sent him to Herod, probably hoping to be rid of the problem.

23:8 ***when Herod saw Jesus.*** Like Pilate, he evidently came to Jerusalem during feast times.

23:8 ***hoped to have seen some miracle.*** Herod wanted to see Jesus because he hoped for a demonstration of miraculous power, something he had heard much about during Jesus' ministry.

23:9 ***he answered him nothing.*** Unlike Pilate, Jesus had absolutely nothing to say to Herod, who mocked him and sent him back to Pilate, though without finding any fault in him (see v. 15).

23:10 ***the chief priests and scribes.*** The Jewish leaders had followed Jesus to Herod's palace, wanting to make sure that Herod fully understood the charges they were bringing against the man from Nazareth.

23:11 ***arrayed him in a gorgeous robe.*** Herod and his soldiers mocked Jesus by dressing him like a king. They apparently sent him back to Pilate that way, which could explain why later the soldiers were so anxious to get their hands on his clothing. This could tie back to both D&C 133:46 for Jesus and Revelation 3:4 for righteous saints.

23:12 **Pilate and Herod were made friends.** Seeing Jesus united these two men who had been at odds with each other previously. Herod's independence from Pilate's rule was probably the reason for their enmity but being on the same page politically here brought them together.

Pilate declares Jesus to be innocent – Luke 23:13-16

In another unique Lukan passage, Pilate boldly told the Jews that they were attempting a miscarriage of justice. As Luke portrays it, the will of the people overrode his own instincts to release and be done with Jesus.

23:14 **I have examined him before you.** Pilate's questioning of Jesus was not done in private but where the Jewish leaders could see and hear everything that happened. They know full well that Pilate has found nothing worthy of Jesus' death in his interactions.

23:15 **No, nor yet Herod.** Herod sent Jesus back without condemnation as well, which the Jewish leaders also knew, since they were there (v. 10).

23:16 **I will therefore chastise him.** The Greek *paideuō*, translated "chastise" in the KJV, has a dual but (sadly) related meaning: to bring up and train a child, and to flog or whip. Pilate's meaning was surely the latter. He was proposing to flog Jesus as a concession to the Jewish leaders' charges but then release him, since Pilate and Herod had both found him innocent of anything worthy of death.

Pilate delivers Jesus to be crucified – Luke 22:17-25 (Matt 27:15-23; Mark 15:6-14; John 18:29-40; 19:16)

See John, with notes about unique features in Luke.

23:17 **For of necessity he must release one.** This parenthetical remark is likely a later scribal addition to parallel Matthew 27:15 and Mark 15:6. It is not in the best manuscripts of Luke.

23:18 **release unto us Barabbas.** Matthew and Mark give a few more details about Barabbas but Luke's unique explanation is clear in verse 19—he had committed "sedition" (or, insurrection) and "murder." Likely he had led some kind of revolt that resulted in the death of Roman soldiers. The shouting by the crowd for Barabbas put great pressure on Pilate. John's gospel explains that the Jewish leaders also threatened Pilate politically if he did not cooperate, thus leaving him no choice but to crucify Jesus.

23:21 **Crucify him, crucify him.** The first "him" is not in the Greek and many translations have 'Crucify, crucify him!' The repetition of the phrase is unique to Luke and emphasizes and emphatic demand of the crowd.

23:23 **they were instant with loud voices.** Luke's narrative attempts to portray Pilate as working hard to get Jesus released (he spoke in Jesus' behalf three times, v. 22) but he is overcome by the boisterousness and pressure from the insistent crowd and finally relents to their will, releasing Barabbas and sending Jesus to the cross (vv. 24-25).

The daughters of Jerusalem – Luke 23:26-31 (Matt 27:31-32; Mark 15:20-21; John 19:17)

See also Mark about Simon. Luke gives the most extensive account of the march to the cross, with a unique encounter with women lining the road lamenting his fate.

23:26 **as they led him away.** Luke's account says nothing about the mocking by the soldiers recorded in the other three gospels (Matthew 27:27-31; Mark 15:16-20; and John 19:2-3). He went straight from the appearance before Pilate to the cross. This may relate to his desire to minimize the guilt of Rome in Jesus' death and place the blame on the Jews themselves.

23:27 **women, which also bewailed and lamented him.** Jesus spoke to the women mourning his certain death. He counseled them not to weep for him but for themselves, prophesying the coming destruction of Jerusalem (verses 28-29).

23:30 **say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.** The quote is from Hosea 10:8, though curiously the order of the verbs "fall" and "cover" is reversed.

Luke 23:31 KJV	JST
For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?	And if these things are done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry tree? This he spake, signifying the scattering of Israel, and the desolation of the heathen, or in other words, the Gentiles.

The phrase comes across as proverbial, but no source has been identified. While the meaning is uncertain, the “green tree” is often interpreted as a reference to Jesus, making the verse mean something like, ‘If they do these things to me (green because his doctrine is true), what will they do to the dry tree of apostate Judaism?’ The JST change broadens the interpretation to include the scattering of Israel but also the destruction of the Gentiles at the last days.

[The crucifixion – Luke 23:32-43 \(Matt 27:33-44; Mark 15:22-32; John 19:17-27\)](#)

While Matthew, Mark, and John add details not in Luke, Luke provides some unique insights, especially regarding the two thieves crucified with Jesus.

23:32 **two other, malefactors.** The Greek is *kakourgos*, meaning criminals. Both Matthew and Mark call them *lēstēs*, which is “robber.” Luke’s term is a general one, implying they have done something evil, which Matthew and Mark’s is more specific, applied to insurrectionists or those who act in violence. In both cases, the language is careful so that the title applies to the other two men and not Jesus.

23:33 **which is called Calvary.** The Greek says *kranion*, meaning ‘skull’ (the translation that both Matthew and Mark supply for their word Golgotha, and which all modern translations use in this verse). “Calvary” is a name inherited from the Latin translation (Vulgate), where it is the Latin word for ‘skull.’

23:33 **they were come to the place.** We have an image of Jesus walking alone through the streets, but it appears here that the two thieves also walked with him, guarded by the same soldiers. They were perhaps chained together, each carrying their own crossbeam, so when Jesus fell, it was holding up the whole procession. This was probably why Simon of Cyrene’s help was enlisted, so they could get the three people to the site of crucifixion without further delay.

23:34 **Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.** Luke alone gives us Jesus’ first words from the cross. The JST clarifies that Jesus was praying for the soldiers who were crucifying him. Manuscript support for this phrase is mixed, meaning it may not have been in the original version of Luke.

23:34 **they parted his raiment, and cast lots.** This is a reference to Psalm 22:18.

23:35 **derided him.** Luke minimizes the mocking of the Jews passing by compared to Matthew and Mark but interestingly transfers some of their comments to the soldiers (vv. 36-37).

23:36 **the soldiers also mocked him.** Luke alone records this detail, but it fits in with what we know about Roman crucifixions of the time and the other behaviors of the soldiers in the accounts. There is some irony that the mocking occurred after Jesus had forgiven them. The soldiers don’t speak of him as the Messiah/Christ, since that would be a foreign concept to a Roman. Instead, they mock him about being the king of the Jews, which is what it says on the sign with him (v. 38).

23:36 **offering him vinegar.** This ‘sour wine’ was offered as part of the mocking, perhaps in contrast to the offering fine wine to a king. The act alludes to Psalm 69:21.

23:38 **in the letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew.** John 19:20 includes the detail about the three languages, but in Luke, it is not in the best and oldest manuscripts and is omitted from all modern translations.

23:38 ***This is the King of the Jews.*** The title written on the cross to identify Jesus differs somewhat in each gospel, though the concept is the same—Pilate was announcing that the King of the Jews was being crucified.

23:39 ***one of the malefactors.*** Though Matthew and Mark says that the others reviled him, Luke alone records the details of this conversation between Jesus and two other men crucified with him.

23:39 ***which were hanged.*** Because Luke used the word *kremannumi*, which means hung or suspended, instead of crucified for the other two men, some have supposed that they were tied with ropes and not crucified with nails.

23:41 ***this man hath done nothing amiss.*** Pilate and Herod were witnesses to Jesus innocence. Now the criminal is a third witness to Jesus' innocence. A fourth witness will come shortly from the centurion (23:47). All of this is in contrast to the Jews who have worked so hard to condemn him.

23:43 ***To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*** Jesus' words to the man crucified with him was his second statement in Luke. "Paradise" (Greek *paradeisos*) is an old Persian loan-word, referring to the gardens and parks enjoyed by royalty. LXX Genesis 2:8 calls Eden a paradise garden. Paul also used the word to represent a place for the righteous after this life (2 Corinthians 12:4) and Revelation alludes to it as well (Revelation 2:7). There are no other NT references to the word.

[The death of Jesus – Luke 23:44-49 \(Matt 27:45-56; Mark 15:33-41; John 19:25-30\)](#)

23:44 ***darkness over all the earth.*** Darkness in the heavens is an ancient sign of the displeasure of the gods. Compare Joel 2:10.

23:45 ***the sun was darkened.*** Luke is the only one to record this detail about the nature of the event, which darkened the sun itself (as opposed to fog or some other air-born obstruction), according to his account.

23:45 ***the veil of the temple was rent.*** Luke is unique in having this occur before Jesus' death. Some think that this shows the Father opening the temple to receive Jesus' spirit. A more common interpretation is that the veil was torn to symbolize that the Atonement allows all people into the presence of God.

23:46 ***Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*** See Psalm 31:5. This was part of the daily evening prayer in the temple. As Jesus hung with outstretched arms and head raised in the same attitude of prayer used by the priest, he was fulfilling the role of the Great High Priest with his final words.

23:46 ***he gave up the ghost.*** The Greek is literally 'he breathed out his life.'

23:47 ***Certainly this was a righteous man.*** The centurion's comment in Luke was not as direct as in Matthew and Mark where the centurion calls him the "son of God." The term Luke used also indicates innocence, going along with Pilate's, Herod's, and the criminal's conclusions, and matching one of Luke's points later in Acts (3:14; 7:52; 22:14) where this same word is used of Jesus (there translated "just").

23:48 ***smote their breasts.*** Compare Luke 18:9-14. In the face of the signs of heaven's displeasure, this is an act of humility and contrition, and likely of repentance, on the part of some who earlier called for his death.

23:49 ***the women that followed him from Galilee.*** First mentioned in Luke 8:2-3, these women bracket Jesus' ministry as they stand as witnesses of his death, when the male disciples seem to have disappeared.

[The burial – Luke 23:50-56 \(Matt 27:57-61; Mark 16:42-47; John 19:38-42\)](#)

23:50 ***a man named Joseph.*** Like Mark, Luke intimates that Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council in Jerusalem. Luke uniquely tell us that he "had not consented to the counsel and deed of them" (v. 51). Verse 51 also contains the oldest example of an emoticon at the end of that phrase ;).

23:53 ***took it down, and wrapped it in linen.*** According to Deuteronomy 21:22-23, someone who died in such a manner should be buried the same day, which was also true in general in their society (and in many today). Joseph was following that practice.

23:55 **the women also.** The women don't appear to do anything with Jesus' body the first day, leaving it to Joseph. But they watch everything and thus are witnesses of his death and burial. Soon they will also be witnesses of his resurrection.

23:56 **prepare spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath.** The women got everything ready for Sunday morning so as soon as possible, they could go finish the burial tasks.

Resurrection Appearances – Luke 24:1-53

Like other things in Luke, he provided resurrection accounts in a set of three: the women at the tomb (24:1-12); the two disciples (24:13-35); and the Eleven (24:36-49). The story of the two disciples is completely unique to Luke. The final verses of the book set us up for the book of Acts, which begins with Jesus' ascension.

The resurrection – Luke 24:1-12 (Matt 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; John 20:1-13)

While John's account is perhaps the most complete, all four tell a similar story with varying details, so all will be discussed.

24:1 **upon the first day of the week.** The first day is Sunday (by our calendar), so this is very early Sunday morning. They would have left even before the sun arose, taking lamps to guide their way.

24:1 **they came unto the sepulchre.** The women would have come fasting, sleepy (from 'keeping vigil'), wearing sackcloth, and with ashes in their hair, all as signs of mourning.

24:2-4 JST

Luke 24:2-4 KJV	JST
And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.	And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre, and two angels standing by it in shining garments.
And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.	And they entered into the sepulchre , and not finding the body of the Lord Jesus,
And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:	they were much perplexed.

In the JST, the angels do not appear but are there waiting for the women to arrive. It was the combination of the angels, the empty sepulchre, and the missing body that made the women so perplexed.

24:5 **bowed down their faces to the earth.** The women showed humility and fear in the presence of the beings in shining garments by completely subjecting themselves to the angel's power in an attitude of surrender and subservience. Luke is the only one to record this reaction by the women.

24:5 **Why seek ye the living among the dead?** This question by the messengers is also unique to Luke, with Matthew and Mark simply declaring that he is not in the tomb, but risen, as they do in Luke next.

24:6 **remember how he spake unto you.** The angels reminded the women that Jesus taught them, since his Galilean ministry, that all these things were going to happen (e.g., Luke 9:22). Thus prompted, "they remembered his words" (v. 8).

24:9 **unto the eleven, and to all the rest.** Once again, we see a crowd gathered with the apostles, perhaps wondering what to do. When the women returned from the tomb, they told this crowd all they had seen and heard.

24:10 **Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women.** Two Marys and a Joanna are mentioned by name, but there were "other women" in this group of women who went to finish up the burial process for Jesus. Mary Magdalene was previously mentioned in Luke (Luke 8:2). Joanna was the wife of "Chuzas,

Herod's steward" and was mentioned as one who ministered to Jesus (Luke 8:3). Mary of James was mentioned in Mark 15:40 and 16:1; the Greek does not say "the mother," allowing that she could be the mother, sister, or wife of James (Jacob), though wife may be preferred.¹⁰

24:11 **their words seemed to them as idle tales.** What the women said was like 'nonsense' (a valid translation of the term "idle tales" here). A man risen from the dead? It had never happened before. And what did women know—their testimonies would not be accepted in a court as valid. Could the men trust them? Luke records that most did not believe them, at first.

24:12 **Then arose Peter, and ran.** Peter himself couldn't discount the words of the women so easily. He went to see for himself and discovered the tomb empty and the strips of clothing used to wrap the body neatly resting on the shelf. It made him wonder: Could the women be right?

Jesus appears to two disciples – Luke 24:13-35 (Mark 16:12-13)

The two "meaty" accounts of the post-resurrection period are found in Luke and especially John. The account of the two disciples on the road is unique to Luke (though Mark 16:12-13 is probably the same story in a very abbreviated form).

24:13 **two of them.** We learn later (v. 18) that the name of one is Cleopas (see BD, "Cleopas"), but the other is unknown. Some have surmised that the second person might be Luke¹¹ because this story is only found in his gospel, but Luke was a Gentile convert of Paul and could not have been present for this event. It was more likely Cleopas' wife or another male disciple (see v. 22) heading home with him from Jerusalem after the Passover.¹² The two probably believed that this stranger was also going home and so struck up a conversation on the road.¹³

24:13 **a village called Emmaus.** It is not known where this town was, but Luke placed it "threescore furlongs" or sixty *stadia* from Jerusalem. A *stadia* is about 600 feet, making sixty of them just under seven miles. The walk would have taken two or three hours, allowing plenty of time to talk.

24:15 **Jesus drew near.** Luke lets us in on the secret so we're 'in the know.' The two disciples didn't realize it was him, as the next verse explains.

24:16 **JST**

Luke 24:16 KJV	JST
But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.	But their eyes were holden, or covered , that they could not know him.

The Greek word translated "holden" means 'hold fast, seize, arrest, restrain' and the passive verb form implies that something external (God) is preventing them from recognizing him. "So is Christ often near to us when our eyes are holden, and we know Him not; and so do ignorance and unbelief often fill our hearts with sadness, even when truest joy would most become us."¹⁴

24:17 **ye walk, and are sad.** The two disciples reflected the general sadness of the disciples, their next words explaining their deep disappointment that Jesus had not turned out to be the Messiah they had imagined.

24:18 **Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem.** Or, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" (ESV). They are amazed that someone has not heard about what happened to Jesus this Passover weekend.

¹⁰ Brown, *The Testimony of Luke*, 1110.

¹¹ Such as Bruce McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* 1:850; Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 638; and Jackson & Millet, *Studies in Scripture*, 5:457.

¹² Holzapfel, *A Lively Hope*, 186-187.

¹³ Arnold, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Background*, 1:499.

¹⁴ Edersheim, *Life and Times*, 640.

24:19 **a prophet might in deed and word.** They did not lessen Jesus' role by calling "a prophet," which is likely a reference to Deuteronomy 18:15-18, a prophecy by Moses of a future prophet like himself. This great prophet spoken of by Moses was considered to be the Messiah.

24:21 **we trusted that it had been he.** The disciples expressed their hope that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah who would redeem Israel, though the sense of "redeem" they intended may have been more political than spiritual, based on Jesus' reaction to their words.

24:21 **to day is the third day.** With Jesus in dead for the third day, as they presumed, he was 'truly dead' now according to the practice and custom of the time. On rare occasions, someone could be in a coma or another condition that would make them appear dead, so the practice was to wait until the third day to declare them finally deceased, just to be sure.

24:22 **certain women . . . made us astonished.** This comment might indicate that the two disciples were male, since both were astonished by the women. While a wife could also have been astonished, the reference to gender seems to indicate a dual male reaction.

24:23 **certain of them which were with us.** These two disciples were apparently: a) in the room with the Twelve and others the night of the last supper (see verse 30 below); b) in the (same?) room with those who were mourning Jesus' death; and, c) heard the reports of the empty tomb from the women and Peter and John, but left to go to Emmaus before the subsequent reports from Mary and others began to pour in of his appearances.

24:24 **him they saw not.** Referring to "certain of them" who went to the sepulchre, the plural form indicates more than one, which matches the story that John tells of Peter and an unnamed disciple (presumably John) both running there (John 20:3-10)

24:25 **O fools, and slow of heart.** 'Fools' is a harsher word today than Jesus probably meant it at the time, though there is an element of chastisement in his words. A different translation might be, 'Oh, how lacking in understanding and dull of thinking.' "The very rebuke with which He opened [his teaching] must have brought its comfort. . . . Their sorrow arose from their folly in looking only at the things seen, and this, from their slowness to believe what the prophets had spoken. Had they attended to this, instead of allowing themselves to be swallowed up by the outward, they would have understood it all."¹⁵

24:26 **Ought not Christ to have suffered these things.** The common Jewish view of the Messiah was the conquering hero, and many of Jesus' disciples no doubt had this same understanding. Jesus taught many times in his life and now in his resurrected state that the Messiah would indeed suffer first, then come in triumph later.

24:27 **he expounded unto them in all the scriptures.** The "scriptures" referred to here, of course, are the books of the Old Testament, "Moses and all the prophets." Jesus was able to cite and explain a multitude of scriptures that referred to his point that Christ should have first suffered as had happened to Jesus (v. 26).

24:29 **they constrained him.** This doesn't mean they physically prevented him, but 'urged' him to stay. Their culture demanded such hospitality, for toward evening one invited even the stranger to stay, it being very dangerous on the dark highways at night.

24:31 **And their eyes were opened.** Though their guest, Jesus played the role of host, broke the bread, and passed it out (v. 30). This activity revealed him to the two he had been teaching, showing that they had probably been at the Passover meal with him and the Twelve. As soon as they recognized him, he vanished from their sight, confirming that he was no mortal, but a divine being. The JST adds that he did not just disappear but was "**taken up**" out of their sight, harking forward to the ascension later in the chapter.

24:32 **Did not our heart burn with us.** The truth of his words was as a fire in their chests, reminding them of a similar experience by Jeremiah when he resolved to quit being a prophet after a period of intense persecution: "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a

¹⁵ Edersheim, *Life and Times*, 641.

burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay” (Jeremiah 20:9). Latter-day scripture teaches this feeling as a way to know truth: “But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right” (D&C 9:8). See also Psalm 39:3.

24:33 rose up the same hour and returned to Jerusalem. Though it was evening when they left, their visit with the risen Lord prompted them to travel several miles in the dark back to Jerusalem to meet up with the others who were gathered (no doubt in the upper room of the Last Supper).

24:34 hath appeared to Simon. When the Emmaus disciples arrived, they discovered that others had been having similar experiences, including Peter (about which visit we know no details but which is confirmed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:5). James Talmage explains that the appearance to Peter was no doubt one “with forgiveness and loving assurance” because of Peter’s “remorseful penitence.”¹⁶ Bruce McConkie adds that the appearance may well have been “associated in some way with the principle of keys,” given Peter’s position as chief apostle.¹⁷

Jesus appears to his disciples in Jerusalem – Luke 24:36-49 (John 20:19-23)

Even as the Emmaus disciples were sharing their experience, Jesus appeared to the gathered crowd, showing the physicality of his body, confirming his identity, and further teaching them from the scriptures. This is Luke’s third and final post-resurrection appearance story, completing the block of witnesses to this event.

24:36 Jesus himself stood in the midst of them. John emphasizes the miraculous nature of the appearance, with the doors all shut tight.

24:36 Peace be unto you. This was the common greeting, *shalom aleikhem* in Hebrew.

24:37 they were terrified. I can imagine many of them feeling this way, but I can also picture Peter, Mary, the other women, the two disciples from Emmaus, and others who had seen him up to this point (perhaps including James, his brother) feeling great joy. Though the time period was less, perhaps they felt as Joseph Smith did when he finally had others with whom to share his burden of knowledge, as recounted by his mother: “On coming in, Joseph threw himself down beside me, and exclaimed, ‘Father, mother, you do not know how happy I am; the Lord has now caused the plates to be shown to three more besides myself. They have seen an angel, who has testified to them, and they will have to bear witness to the truth of what I have said, for now they know for themselves that I do not go about to deceive the people, and I feel as if I was relieved of a burden which was almost too heavy for me to bear, and it rejoices my soul that I am not any longer to be entirely alone in the world.’”¹⁸

24:38 why do thoughts arise your hearts? This verse demonstrates the ancient way of viewing thinking as originating in the heart, with emotions centering in the kidneys. Odd as that may sound to us, our perspective that emotions come from the heart is no more anatomically correct.

24:39 a spirit hath not flesh and bones. Luke calls out the physical nature of the resurrection. Jesus had his body, complete with the scars of the crucifixion (a fact John makes explicit but is here implied by him showing his hands and feet). To emphasize this, he also ate before them (vv. 42-43).

24:44 the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms. As with the Emmaus disciples, Jesus opened the scriptures to them (v. 45). The three division of the Hebrew scriptures are given: *Torah*, the law; *Nevi'im*, the prophets; and *Ketu'bim*, the writings, here represented by the most prominent book in the collection, Psalms.

24:48 ye are witnesses of these things. Not only had they all seen and heard him, making them witnesses, but Jesus was declaring their proactive assignment now to bear that witness to the world soon (another transition to Acts).

¹⁶ Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 687.

¹⁷ McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:851.

¹⁸ *History of the Church*, 1:59, note 4.

24:49 ***I send the promise of my Father***. See Acts 1:4-5, Luke’s continuation of his gospel, where it makes it clear this promise was fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit to them on the day of Pentecost.

The ascension – Luke 24:50-53 (Mark 16:19-20)

24:50 ***he led them out***. Luke gave this account in greater detail in Acts 1:2-11. There is an ascension account in Mark as well, but it is in the ‘late’ addition to Mark in the final verses of chapter 16; it’s likely Mark’s account was copied from Luke by a later scribe, making Luke’s ascension information exclusive to his gospel.

24:50 ***he lifted up his hands, and blessed them***. This was the priestly benediction, taking us back to the beginning of Luke’s account. Zacharias entered into the temple to light the incense then exited to offer a blessing upon the people, but could not because he was struck dumb. Now Jesus offered that blessing instead, full of authority from God.

24:51 ***carried up into heaven***. The language is reminiscent of Elijah who was separated from Elisha and carried up into heaven on a fiery chariot (2 Kings 2:11).

24:53 ***were continually in the temple***. Luke ends his gospel where it began—in Jerusalem and in the temple.

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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