

The Gospel of Luke

Chapter 7

(Luke 7:1-50)

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III. **The Ministry of the Son of Man to Men, Luke 4:14-9:50.**

D. **Activities of His Ministry, Luke 7:1-9:50.**

1. **Ministry in sickness, Luke 7:1-10.**
2. **Ministry in death, Luke 7:11-17.**
3. **Ministry in doubt, Luke 7:18-35.**
4. **Ministry to sinners, Luke 7:36-50.**

1. **Ministry in sickness, Luke 7:1-10**, Jesus heals the Centurions servant. This is paralleled in **Mat 8:5-13**. This story is a foreshadowing of the impending Church Age, where Gentile nations are the client nations to God for delivering the Gospel and building the body/church of Jesus Christ.

Vs. 1

Luke 7:1, “When He had completed all His discourse in the hearing of the people, He went to Capernaum.”

After finishing the Great Sermon on the Plain, **Chapter 6**, Jesus then traveled to Capernaum, a city on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. As we have noted, this was most likely the headquarters and home of Jesus during His ministry, **Mat 4:13; 9:1; Mark 2:1.**



Vs. 2

Luke 7:2, “And a centurion’s slave, who was highly regarded by him, was sick and about to die.”

“**Centurion**” HEKATONTARCHOS ἑκατόνταρχος could also be called a “captain” is from the number HEKATON “100,” and ARCHOS (from ARCHES, “ruler”), Therefore, HEKATONTARCHOS means, “a leader of 100 men,” within a Roman legion of approximately six thousand soldiers. So, this man was also a Gentile.

HEKATONTARCHOS is used for this gentleman in our passage and **Mat 8:5-13**. Later, in **Mat 27:54; Luke 23:47**, we see another “believing” Centurion at the cross of Jesus Christ. Then in Acts, we see Centurion used in **Acts 21, 22, 27**.

This centurion had a “**slave**” DOULOS, whom he “**highly regarded**” ENTIMOS meaning, “held in honor, highly esteemed, valued or precious.” It is also used in **Luke 14:8; Phil 2:29; 1 Peter 2:4, 6**. It is likely the sense here is that the centurion “respected or esteemed” his servant.

This highly regarded slave “**was sick and about to die**” KAKOS, “ill or sick,” with TELEUTAO “bring to pass, finish, or die.” Matthew says this slave was, “lying or thrown down paralyzed and fearfully tormented,” which sounds more like the results of demonic possession as used in **Luke 8:28**. Nevertheless, Luke just says “ill and near death.”

Vs. 3

Luke 7:3, “When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave.”

Here, we see that the Centurion “**heard**” AKOUO, about Jesus. Apparently, he had never met Jesus nor personally listened to His teachings. But he learned about Him from others and believed in who He was and what He could do. Such faith is actually the perspective of the contemporary Church. We must rely upon the preaching of the Word by our Pastor/Teacher, together with the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, to evoke faith. We cannot personally “see or hear” Jesus in the literal physical sense. This reminds us of **John 20:29; 1 Peter 1:8**, “**Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.**”

1 Peter 1:8, “And though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.”

Having great faith by hearing, He sent APOSTELLO some of the “**Jewish elders**” IOUDAIOS PRESBUTEROS, to Jesus. These may have been the same men that told the Centurion about Jesus and His teachings in the synagogue there, cf. **vs. 5**. That Jewish elders would consent to be sent by a Gentile is strange indeed, but assuredly because of their close relationship with him in faith, as noted below by the Centurion’s deeds, they were willing to help a friend.

Matthew reads as if the Centurion went directly to petition Jesus, **Mat 8:5**, but in Luke, he sends the elders who are the older men of the society that are honored for their knowledge and wisdom. Later in Luke, we see different elders aligning with the Scribes, Chief Priests, and Pharisees against Jesus, See **Luke 9:22; 20:1; 22:52**. Yet, this group seems to have been positive towards Jesus and His ministry.

The phrase, “**Asking**” EROTAO, **Him to come and save the life of his slave**” is like an intercessory petition prayer, yet done in person. They wanted Him to come and “**save**” DIASOZO, “save, recover, heal perfectly,” the slave, cf. **Mat 14:36**.

Interestingly, “**saving the life of the DOULOS (servant or slave)**” is exactly why Jesus came to earth. He died on the Cross for the sins of the entire world, but only those who believe upon Him are saved and become His DOULOS, **Rom 1:1; Gal 1:10; Phil 1:1; Col 4:12; 2 Tim 2:24; 1 Peter 2:16**.

Vs. 4

Luke 7:4, “When they came to Jesus, they earnestly implored Him, saying, ‘He is worthy for You to grant this to him.’”

Notice these elders “**came to Jesus**” PARAGINOMAI παραγίνομαι, “arrive, come near, appear, come forward, or stand by.” It reminds us of our “drawing near” to God for salvation and when we pray, **Heb 4:16; 7:25; 10:11; James 4:8.**

James 4:8, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”

Heb 4:16, “Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Heb 7:25, “Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”

Heb 10:22, “Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”

They “**implored**” PARAKALEO, “called for, exhorted, or encouraged,” Jesus to heal the slave of the Centurion. They virtually beg Jesus to come and save.

They said that the Centurion was “**worthy**” for Jesus to grant his request. “**Worthy**” is the Adjective AXIOS ἄξιος that means, “worthy, deserving, fit, good enough, or suitable,” based on the idea of a balanced scale. In the Jewish elders’ eyes, this man had demonstrated his worth by his actions. Here, we see the Biblical concept of true worth coming from a close relationship to Jesus, just as we should walk worthy of our calling, **Eph 4:1; Phil 1:27; Col 1:10; 1 Thes 2:12.**

They asked Jesus to “**grant this to him,**” meaning they were asking Jesus to give of Himself to the Centurion and the slave. Give them healing.

Vs. 5

Luke 7:5, “For he loves our nation and it was he who built us our synagogue.”

The demonstration of the Centurion’s worth is noted here. Even though he was a Gentile and occupier of Israel, they said “**he loves our nation**” AGAPAO HEMEIS ETHNOS. He also, “**he built us our synagogue,**” which uses OIKODOMEO for “built,” and reminds us of the wise and prudent man of **Luke 6:48**, who dug deep and laid the foundation of his house upon the rock when building it. This speaks to the deep faith this Centurion had that was also demonstrated by his actions and deeds.

In addition, it is a foreshadowing of the Church the Gentile peoples would build through Christ during the Church Age. It is a precursor to the Gentiles being given the responsibility to build the Church, build the body of Jesus Christ, because God was about to remove that responsibility from the Jewish people. Therefore, loving Israel and building the Church, the body of Christ, is the foreshadowing of the Gentile’s responsibility for the Church Age.

Vs. 6

Luke 7:6, “Now Jesus started on His way with them; and when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to Him, ‘Lord, do not trouble Yourself further, for I am not worthy for You to come under my roof.’”

“**Now Jesus started on His way with them,**” tells us that Jesus walks, POREUOMAI, with the faithful believers.

“**The centurion sent friends**” PEMP PHILOS, “sent friends or loved ones.” The Centurion clearly understood that

Jews do not normally enter a Gentile's home for fear of ritual contamination. For Jesus to enter might require a time-consuming purification ritual and temporary disqualification from worship in the temple. The centurion hoped to spare Jesus the trouble. Therefore, he sent either friends or family member to Jesus and instructed them to address Jesus as "**Lord**" KURIOS which too reminds us of **Luke 6:46**, yet this man called Him Lord and believed that Jesus was his Lord and Savior.

As the Centurion believed in Jesus as his Lord, he witnessed that to others and instructed them to also call Him, (believe Him to be), Lord.

"Do not trouble SKULLO Yourself further," is the Centurion showing his great faith. In **Mark 5:35; Luke 8:48**, SKULLO is used to demonstrate the Jewish religious leaders lack of faith, as they did not believe that Jesus could raise a young girl from the dead, so they did not want to trouble Him with a petition to do so. Yet, this Centurion faithfully believed that Jesus could raise the dead and heal the sick, and therefore petitioned Him to do so for his slave.

"For I am not worthy for You to come under my roof." This demonstrates the humility of the Centurion where he recognized that he was "**not worthy**" OUK HIKANOS to have Jesus come to his home, STEGE "**roof or home,**" only in **Mat 8:8; Mark 2:4; Luke 7:6**. The Adjective HIKANOS means, "sufficient, adequate, competent, worthy, etc." Even though the Jews considered the Centurion worthy, he, in specific acknowledgment of Jesus' authority by calling Him "Lord," and as noted in **vs. 8**, admitted his own need before Jesus. Therefore, the principle, Jesus is Lord in the heart of the humble servant; he acknowledges his own need before Him.

Vs. 7

Luke 7:7, "For this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed."

The sense of the centurion's lack of worth is reemphasized here. In humility, the Centurion did not think that he was worthy enough to be in the presence of God, yet He has faith that Jesus could heal, "**just say the word, and my servant will be healed** (IAOMAI)." We noted the Verb IAOMAI, "heal, cure, or restore," in **Luke 4:18**, which was Jesus' purpose for coming, cf. **Luke 5:17; 6:19**; His healing of the people of their various illnesses but really for their salvation.

Luke 4:18, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed."

Here, the Centurion calls his slave a "**servant,**" using the Noun PAIS παῖς that means, "servant, child, son or daughter." This demonstrates the close relationship he had with his slave, DOULOS, in **Mat 19:13ff.**, Jesus said that those who are children or who have the characteristics of children will belong to the Kingdom. In **Mat 18:3**, Jesus taught that people must humble themselves like children to enter the Kingdom. Therefore, the slave becomes a child, demonstrating the close relationship the believer can have with Jesus. This Centurion had demonstrated the humility of his soul and membership in the Kingdom of Heaven as a child of God.

Vs. 8

Luke 7:8, "For I also am a man placed under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it."

Prior to this we have seen a lot of "sending out" by the Centurion, which reminds us that God the Father has "sent forth" His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world for our healing / salvation. Here, the Centurion recognizes in humility, the authority EXOUSIA, "**authority** or power," that has been given to him by the Roman Army, "**with soldiers under me.**" Here, we see the Centurion based his faithful actions upon his personal experience in life. He gives an example of the authority he has been given, by describing the commands he is able to give to others and their response to his commands. Not only was he under authority himself, but he also had authority over others. Also, the authority

is evaluated in terms of the spoken word, as the Word of God is the authority over our lives and all of mankind. In faith, we must also recognize the authority of Jesus Christ in our lives.

He recognizes that this authority was **“appointed”** by the Roman Government and army, and thereby by God, cf. **Rom 13:1**. This uses the Verb TASSO τάσσω that means, “place, fix, determine, appoint, or direct.” It reminds us that we are appointed by God for salvation, **Acts 13:48**, and for ministry.

Vs. 9

Luke 7:9 “Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled at him, and turned and said to the crowd that was following Him, ‘I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith.’”

Here, Jesus is astonished by and **“marvels at”** THAUMAZO the Centurion’s **“faith”** PISTIS. Previously, we have seen the crowds astonished by Jesus, His words, and His miracles, **Luke 4:22**, but here Jesus is blown away by this Gentile’s faith, especially in comparison to the people of Israel.

The faithful belief of this Gentile is contrasted even more harshly in Matthew’s gospel, as he also adds Jesus saying in vs. 11-12, **“I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; ¹²but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”**

This shows the unbelief of the individual Israelite who rejects Jesus as their Messiah. They will be cast into Hell / the Eternal Lake of Fire. The contrast Jesus is drawing is the great faith of the Centurion, vs. 13b, **“as you have believed,”** and the lack of faith found in many Israelites who have rejected the Messiah as noted by the fact that in vs. 12b, **“The sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”** This is a depiction of Hell or the Eternal Lake of Fire where only unbelievers are placed in that eternal state. So, Jesus is rebuking the Israelites for their lack of faith in the Messiah that brings salvation.

Nevertheless, the Centurion’s faithful willingness to believe in Jesus’ authority and to place himself under that authority resulted in unprecedented praise by Jesus of his actions. Just as the faithful believer will be praised by Jesus in the eternal state, **Mat 25:31, 23; Luke 19:17**.

Mat 25:21, “His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’”

Vs. 10

Luke 7:10, “When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.”

Matthew expands on this part too, by noting in vs. 13, **“And Jesus said to the centurion, ‘Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed.’ And the servant was healed that very moment.”**

Unlike Matthew, Luke does not mention Jesus telling the Centurion that He would answer his intercessory petition, only that He did heal his servant, as noted in the phrase, **“they found the slave in good health.”** This uses the Verb HUGIAINO ὑγιαίνω that means, “be in good health, be sound, wholesome, or correct.”

We noted this Verb in **Luke 5:31, “And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick.’”** Therefore, we see the apropos title for Jesus as the Great Physician.

Notice that **“those who had been sent returned to the house,”** when we who are sent, PEMPO once again, complete our missionary work / ambassadorship for our Lord Jesus Christ, we too will **“return home”** HUPOSTREPHO OIKOS, that is, be brought to heaven, our true citizenship and home, **Eph 2:19; Phil 3:20**.

As we have noted, this story is a foreshadowing of the impending Church Age, where Gentile nations are the client nations to God for delivering the Gospel and building the body/church of Jesus Christ.

Finally, notice that Jesus does not make an issue of the Centurion having a slave / servant; He only makes an issue of his faith, which is a lesson for us all. And this soldier's faith was demonstrated through his AGAPE love, as he:

1. Loved his slave, something highly unusual for a Roman soldier.
2. Loved his fellow man, even those of another race that he was a part in occupying.
3. Loved Israel, the chosen people of God.
4. Loved his church, as he used his treasures to build a new one.
5. Loved his submission, having understood and respected authority, he embraced submission to God.
6. Loved God, by applying faithful actions in his life, even before his encounter with Jesus.
7. Loved the Word of God, as he was taught the truth about Jesus by others, he accepted it wholeheartedly.

Yet, He did not love himself. He was humble. Even though he was a man of authority and position, he did not let that go to his head. He remained humble. He did not even think he was worthy to appear before Jesus or have Jesus in his home.

III. The Ministry of the Son of Man to Men, Luke 4:14-9:50.

D. Activities of His Ministry, Luke 7:1-9:50.

2. Ministry in death, Luke 7:11-17.

Jesus raises a widow's adult son. This scene is only recorded in Luke's Gospel that was written to Gentiles, and specifically Theophilus. This episode depicts what Jesus would do for all believers; raise us from the dead. It also speaks to our relationship with God as "adult sons," through our adoption, cf. **Rom 8:15, 23; 9:4; Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5.**

Rom 8:15, "For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!'"

Rom 8:23, "And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body."

Rom 9:4, "Who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises."

Gal 4:5, So that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."

Eph 1:5, "He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will."

Vs. 11

Luke 7:11, "Soon afterwards He went to a city called Nain; and His disciples were going along with Him, accompanied by a large crowd."

This scene takes place in a city built on the side of Mt. Moreh in the Galilee region names NAIN that means, "lovely or a delight." It was located about 25 miles southwest of Capernaum.

"This town is mentioned in Scripture only in connection with the visit of Jesus and the miracle of raising the widow's son from the dead (Luke 7:11). The name persists to this day, and in the form of Nein clings to a small village on the northwestern slope of Jebel ed-Duhy ("Hill of Moreh"), the mountain which, since the Middle Ages, has been known as Little Hermon." (The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia).





Here we see both the disciples, MATHETES, of Jesus and great crowds, MEGAS OCHLOS followed. There were many witnesses to this miracle of raising the dead. Just as there were many witnesses to Christ's resurrection, as there will be upon the resurrection and Rapture of the Church.

Vs. 12

Luke 7:12, "Now as He approached the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her."

This is a picture of utter despair, as they carried out this widow's dead son to be buried. This city is said to not have been surrounded by a wall, most likely because it was on the mountain Moreh. They did not have a "gate" PULE, as such, but did have an entrance into the city. It reminds us that the way to Jesus, and therefore resurrection to eternal life is through the narrow gate, **Mat 7:13-14; cf. Luke 13:24.**

Luke 13:24, "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able."

As Jesus was approaching, "a dead man was being carried out" that uses the Hapaxlegomena of Imperfect, Passive, Indicative of the Verb EKKOMIZO for, "carried out," and the Perfect, Active Participle of the Verb THNESKO θνήσκω that means "die" or here "dead." This was presumably to bury him.

He was an "only son" MONOGENES HUIOS, just as Jesus was. This reminds us that Jesus, God's only son, **John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9**, was carried outside the gates of Jerusalem for His death, **Heb 13:12.**

Heb 13:12, "Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate."

We also see that many more witnesses of Jesus' miracle were there as a **“sizeable crowd from the city was with her”** HIKANOS OCHLOS HO POLIS SUN AUTE

Vs. 13

Luke 7:13, “When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, ‘Do not weep.’”

Seeing the widow grieving, our **“Lord”** HO KURIOS, had **“compassion for her”** SPLANCHNIZOMAI, *σπλαγχνίζομαι* in the Aorist, Passive, Indicative, that means, “have compassion, feel sympathy, have mercy.” Its root SPLANCHNON means, “inner parts, or internal organs” that were especially seen as the source of the emotions including pity and mercy.

This is a demonstration of His love for this widowed woman and the people in general as noted in **Mat 9:36**, cf. **Mat 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; Mark 1:41; 6:34; 8:2**; cf. **Luke 10:33; 15:20**.

Mat 9:36, “Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.”

Mat 14:14, “When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.”

In our verse, we see the compassionate character of our Lord most clearly illustrated. God in Christ, is moved with compassion and pity to act on behalf of a lost and dying world. At the heart of this compassion is His great love for all mankind, **John 3:16**, where He gave His only Son.

This led our Lord to **“say to her, ‘Do not weep’”** ME KLAIO κλαίω, “weep, mourn, lament, cry, or show emotion.” “Don’t cry” is really not comforting if you cannot change the situation. Death is a situation that ordinary human beings cannot change. Death seems so final when it comes to our puny power. But, to our Lord God, it was not a problem at all.

This also tells us that Jesus is not merely Lord over the living. He is also Lord over the dead! He has authority to reverse the power of death and to give life again. Raising this man from the dead is another proof and precursor of what Jesus will do in the end. He Himself will be raised from the dead for our justification, and in the end, He will raise all men; the righteous to heaven and the wicked to hell.

Saying “do not weep,” also reminds us of the beatitude in **Luke 6:21b, “Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh,”** cf. **Luke 8:52**. It also reminds us that in the eternal state for the believer there will be **“no more tears,”** **Rev 21:4**.

Rev 21:4, “And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

Vs. 14

Luke 7:14, “And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, ‘Young man, I say to you, arise!’”

Unlike He did for healing the faithful Centurion’s servant, here Jesus **“touched”** HPATO, **“the coffin”** SOROS, “funeral couch, bier, or coffin,” (only used here in the NT), to raise this young man, as He touched the leper for healing in **Luke 5:13**.

“The bearers,” uses the Present, Active, Participle of BASTAZO βαστάζω, “pick up, lift up, or sustain,” that reminds us of Jesus in **Mat 8:17, “This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: ‘He Himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases (sin),’”** that quotes **Isa 53:4**, and **John 19:17, “They took**

Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha.”

Jesus then “**said**” EIPON, to the “**young man**” NEANISKOS, “**arise,**” which is the Aorist, Passive, Imperative of the Verb EGEIRO ἐγείρω that means, “raise, be raised, rise, appear, wake up, or arouse!” We have noted this word in **Luke 1:69; 5:23-24; 6:8**, regarding our Lord, the paralytic and the man with the withered hand. In active fulfillment of His mission as God’s Appointed, **Luke 4:16-31; 7:22ff.**, Jesus demonstrated His power and authority over death.

As we have noted, EGEIRO is a word used for “resurrection,” as is here and extensively throughout the NT for both Jesus’ resurrection and ours, cf. **Rom 4:24-25; 1 Cor 15:4-52; Eph 5:14**. Having noted this word previously in the Gospel of Luke, especially in Jesus’ healings of infirmaries that were analogies for His power in resurrection, here we actually see Him resurrecting a young man, which foreshadows the resurrection of all believers upon His Second Coming, cf. **Luke 3:8; 5:23-24; 6:8**. This is possible because the Father has provided His only Son for our salvation, **Luke 1:69**.

Luke 1:69, “And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant.”

We will see our Lord raise a young girl in **Luke 8:54**, as he does for Lazarus in **John 11:1-43; John 12**. All of these resurrection precursors; our Lord’s resurrection and ours. Yet technically, this scene, the young girl, and Lazarus’ are considered resuscitations, because this man and the others, as those raised during our Lord’s death upon the Cross, **Mat 27:52-53**, will physically die again. Biblically, “resurrection” is the raising of the dead to eternal life never to die again.

Vs. 15

Luke 7:15, “The dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother.”

“**The dead man**” uses the Noun NEKROS that means, “dead or lifeless.”

“**Sat up**” is the Verb ANAKATHIZO ἀνακαθίζω that is only used here and in **Acts 9:40** when Peter raised a girl who had died in Joppa. Therefore, both usages refer to the action of someone who was raised from the dead.

“**Began to speak**” ARCHO LALEO is given as proof that this young man had truly been raised from the dead. The old expression “dead men don’t talk” obviously did not apply on this occasion. The man started speaking.

Then, in the compassion of our Lord, he “**gave him back to his mother.**” This also reminds us of when Jesus was being crucified and gave His widowed mother a son, John the Apostle, to take care of her after Jesus’ death, **John 19:27, “Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’ From that hour the disciple took her into his own household.”**

This incident recalls Elijah’s raising of the widow’s son in Zarephath, **1 Kings 17:10**; cf. **Luke 4:26**. In both cases, the widow was met at the gate of a city, **1 Kings 17:10**, the son was resuscitated, **1 Kings 17:22**, and the son was presented back alive to the mother **1 Kings 17:23**. This is one reason for the praise of our Lord in the next verse.

Vs. 16

Luke 7:16, “Fear gripped them all, and they began glorifying God, saying, ‘A great prophet has arisen among us!’ and, ‘God has visited His people!’”

Like the Centurion, there is no mention of the widow’s response, but we do see the response of the people. “**Fear gripped them all,**” uses PHOBOS φόβος that means, “fear, terror, alarm, reverence, or respect.” The latter is the application here, reverence and respect, because “**they began glorifying God**” DOXAZO THEOS. This is similar to what we have seen in **Luke 2:13, 20; 5:26**. Their glorification of God included two proclamations, both are Messianic, even if they did not realize it:

1) **“A great prophet has arisen among us!”** This reads – MEGAS.

PROPHETES EGEIRO EN HEMEIS. This praise is in remembrance of the great prophet Elijah. Jesus was like him, but even greater. Expectation of the return of one of the prophets was at that time widely spread, cf. **Luke 9:8, 19**. Seeing this miracle of raising the dead was evidence that a great prophet like Elijah has come again. They may even have viewed this as the fulfillment of God’s promise to send them The Prophet in **Deut 18:15-18**. Seeing Jesus as a prophet, cf. **Luke 4:23–24; 7:39; 9:8, 19; 13:33; 22:64; 24:19; Acts 3:22; 7:37**.

Acts 3:22, “Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed to everything He says to you.’”

2) **“God has visited His people,”** uses, THEOS EPISKEPTOMAI ATUOS HO LAOS, cf. **Luke 1:68, 78**. This is a common OT expression describing God’s actions on behalf of His people, **Exo 4:31; Ruth 1:6; Psa 106:4**; cf. **Luke 19:44; Acts 15:14**. It recognizes that Jesus was the Son of God. It also refers to the long absence of the miraculous powers God had exercised through the prophets. None had raised the dead since the days of Elisha. Therefore, with Jesus raising the dead, God was with the people once again.

Luke 1:68, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people.”

Luke 19:44, “And they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.”

In the raising of this young man, such a positive response by the people suggests recognition by the people that Jesus was the Messiah, in contrast to the religious leaders of that day. Therefore, this miracle was an implicit validation of Jesus as the Messiah. Later in **vs. 22**, when asked by John’s disciples whether or not He was the “Coming One,” Jesus replied, **“The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the gospel is preached to the poor.”** These “signs” confirmed the Messianic identity of Jesus, and, as we have seen, miracles could provide a basis for faith, cf. **Luke 5:8**.

Vs. 17

Luke 7:17, “This report concerning Him went out all over Judea and in all the surrounding district.”

Luke once again speaks to the impact of Jesus’ coming and work, as he tells of the “chatter” amongst the people after Jesus performs this miracle. In both the region of Galilee (PERICHOROS), and all of Israel (PAS IOUDAIA), they were “**talking / reporting**” LOGOS about Him, the various miracles He had done, and His teachings, cf. **Luke 4:37; 5:15, 26**.

III. The Ministry of the Son of Man to Men, Luke 4:14-9:50.

D. Activities of His Ministry, Luke 7:1-9:50.

3. Ministry in doubt, Luke 7:18-35.

This section makes even clearer the Messianic identity of Jesus. At this time, John the Baptist was in prison **Luke 3:20**, and sent some of his disciples to ask Jesus specifically about His identity. This scene is paralleled in **Mat 11:2-19** and can be broken down into three sections:

1. John’s doubting inquiry of Jesus and Jesus’ encouragement, **vs. 18-23**.
2. Jesus’ teaching of John the Baptist’s faith and place inside the Plan of God, **vs. 24-29**.
3. Jesus’ rebuke of the unbelieving Pharisees, **vs. 30-35**.

1. John’s doubting inquiry of Jesus and Jesus’ encouragement, vs. 18-23.

Vs. 18-20

Luke 7:18-20 “The disciples of John reported to him about all these things. ¹⁹Summoning two of his disciples, John sent them to the Lord, saying, ‘Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?’ ²⁰And when the men had come to Him, they said, ‘John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?’”

Here, we see John the Baptist was perplexed. We see that he was having a moment of doubt, even though he was a spiritual giant. This is understandable, as we all go through periods of doubt in our faith, especially when we are in dire situations. John was locked up in prison, possibly thinking he was not having an impact for God, especially compared to his prior ministry. He was not seeing this as his decrease, while Jesus had to increase, **John 3:30**, and therefore was doubting God’s great plan of salvation including his and Jesus’ part. Like Elijah, John became frustrated when things did not go the way he thought they should. Perhaps John also had the preconceived notion that the Messiah would set things right immediately and overthrow the Roman government and turn Israel to righteousness. Yet, this was not happening and John wanted to know whether Jesus was truly the promised One or not. Likewise, although Elijah dared to stand up to the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, he fled in doubt and despair from the wicked Queen Jezebel when she threatened his life, **1 Kings 18:20-40; 19:1-18**. Therefore, John presents to Jesus an uncharacteristic question to sooth his moment of doubt and despair.

“**Expected One**,” is the Present, Middle/Passive Deponent, Participle in the Nominative case of the verb ERCHOMAI that means, “Come, appear, or go,” and is used here as a title for Jesus. It is used as a title here where the expression “the Coming One” was commonly used as a Messianic title, **Mat 11:3; Heb 10:37**. It also often referred to prophetic events, conveying either the thought of imminency or certainty, **1 Thes 1:10**.

Heb 10:37, “For yet in a very little while, he who is coming will come, and will not delay.” cf. **Hab 2:3; Rev 22:17, 20**.

“**Do we look for someone else?**” uses the Present, Active, Indicative of PROSDOKAO προσδοκάω that means, “wait for, look for, anticipate, or expect.” This seems like a shocking question, especially since John the Baptist was our Lord’s cousin, and when Baptizing Jesus stated, “**Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world**,” in **John 1:29, 36**. But, when we think of John imprisoned and his despair because of his plight, we can see that even a spiritual giant can have times of doubt. Therefore, he needed the reassurance that Jesus, his own cousin, was indeed that Messiah, just as we do from time to time.

Vs. 21

Luke 7:21, “At that very time He cured many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He gave sight to many who were blind.”

To answer John’s and his disciples’ question, Jesus did not answer with a simple “yes” or “no.” Neither did He send John’s disciples back with a multitude of high-sounding theological or philosophical arguments. Instead, He gives proof or signs that He is the Messiah through loving compassionate actions by “**curing many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He gave sight to many who were blind**.” Jesus’ four loving compassionate actions (the number of material things) spoke louder than any words could ever do.

This verse combines the words we have seen thus far in Luke’s Gospel about Jesus’ ministry including, “**curing or healing**” THERPEUO, “**diseases, illnesses, or sickness**” NOSOS, **Luke 4:40; 6:18**, “**evil spirits**” PONEROS PNEUMA, **Luke 4:33, 36; 6:18**, and “**granting sight to the blind**” CHARIZOMAI BLEPO TUPHOLOS, **Luke 4:18**.

“**Afflictions**” is a new word, the Noun MASTIX that means here, “torment or suffering,” that originally meant, “horsewhip,” and was also used for, “scourging, lashing, or whipping.” The application here, as in **Mark 3:10; 5:29, 34**, is of various kinds of illnesses.

Jesus’ ministry was to help people find release from their desperate condition, i.e., sin. God’s mercy was being shown to the sick, afflicted, oppressed, and sightless. As such, the Messiah was bringing God’s mercy to the fore, not His judgment.

Therefore, John's question and Jesus' response show the contrast in the two cousins; their natures and their ministries. John was rugged; he preached judgment. He called for radical repentance and told the people God's wrath was about to visit them. Jesus was compassionate, longsuffering, and loving. He preached the kingdom of God and told the people God's mercy was already here. Yet, they both were used inside God the Father's great plan of salvation, and both sought to bring the people to believe in Jesus for salvation, **John 20:31**.

John 20:31, "But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

Vs. 22

Luke 7:22, "And He answered and said to them, 'Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.'" This is paralleled in **Mat 11:5**.

Jesus then tells John's disciples to go and "**report**," APANGELLO, back to John all that they "**saw**" EIDON, and "**heard**" AKOUO. They learned through the eye gate and the ear gate, and now needed to tell / teach others, (John specifically), about who Jesus was. John knew about the OT prophets, so his disciples' education included six proofs (the number of man) that are OT allusions specifically to **Isa 35:5-7; 26:19; 29:18; 61:1**, that would declare the Messiah's "coming."

- 1) **The blind received sight**, TUPHLOS ANABLEPO, fulfilling **Isa 35:5a**.
- 2) **The lame walk**, CHOLOS PERIPATEO, **Isa 35:6a; Luke 5:22**.
- 3) **The lepers are cleansed**, LEPROS KATHARIZO, **Luke 4:27; 5:12-13**.
- 4) **The deaf hear**, KOPHOS AKOUO, **Isa 35:5b; Luke 11:14**.
- 5) **The dead are raised**, NEKROS EGERIO, **Isa 26:19; Luke 7:14-15**.
- 6) **The poor have the gospel preached to them**, PTOCHOS EUANGELIZO, **Luke 3:18; 4:43; 6:20**, in fulfillment of **Isa 61:1**, as Jesus announced in **Luke 4:18**.

Vs. 23

Luke 7:23, "Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me."

The Greek uses MAKARIOS for "**blessed**," just as in the Beatitudes, **Luke 6:20-2, cf. Mat 5:3-11**, and in the parallel of **Mat 11:6**. It means the, "gracious favor of God be upon someone," that has the result of inner peace and happiness.

This type of gracious favor will also be upon those "**who are not ever offended in Me (Jesus)**" HOS EIMI ME EAN SKANDALIZO EN EGO. SKANDALIZO is in the Aorist, Passive, Subjunctive for the conditional clause of, "**if you are not offended**." It is a third class "if" statement with the negative ME meaning, "if and you are probably not offended." It leaves the option open for being offended at Jesus, but assumes that they are most likely not offended in Him, meaning they believe in Him as the Messiah, rather than rejecting Him.

SKANDALIZO can mean, "to put a stumbling block in the way, cause to be caught (or) to fall, cause to fall away, be led into sin, offend, anger, or shock." It is the sense of negatively reacting to Jesus. cf. **Isa 8:14; Rom 9:33; Mark 14:29; Luke 17:2; 1 Cor 1:23; 1 Peter 2:8**.

Rom 9:33, "Just as it is written, "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed."

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

Therefore, we see its use in regard to someone's negative volition towards Jesus. Yet, in our verse, it is accompanied with the negative ME and therefore assumes positive volition towards Jesus that results in God's grace coming into their life, which causes inner peace, happiness, and joy. Jesus spoke this in general for all, but was giving an

encouragement to John the Baptist to stand firm in his faith.

You see, many of the Jews, especially the Pharisees, could not accept Jesus because He was not the mighty, conquering Prince they were expecting. They stumbled or were offended at His humility, lowliness, and compassion toward outcasts, **vs. 22**. They could not understand His longsuffering, patience, and delay in executing judgment. Even John the Baptist did not fully understand. He had preached that the Messiah would be a Judge, whose coming would mark the time when the ax would be laid to the root of the tree, and when the chaff would be burned with unquenchable fire, **Mat 3:10-12**. But, Jesus calls those “blessed” who do not stumble. Such stumbling leads to the sin of rejecting God’s good news that the Savior comes in mercy before He comes in judgment. We are truly blessed when we accept His mercy and receive Jesus as our Savior and Deliverer.

2. Jesus’ teaching of John the Baptist’s faith and place inside the Plan of God, vs. 24-29.

Luke 7:24-27, “When the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the crowds about John, “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are found in royal palaces! ²⁶But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet. ²⁷This is the one about whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send My messenger ahead of you, who will prepare Your way before You.’”

In regard to the faith of John the Baptist, Jesus uses five examples, (the number of grace), for what they saw in John out in the wilderness, i.e., John’s place of ministry:

Vs. 24

Luke 7:24, “When the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the crowds about John, ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?’”

1. A reed shaken by the wind? The answer to this question is a resounding No! Reeds in marshes bend easily with the wind; they do not stand tall and upright. Yet, John stood tall and firm having Godly convictions and would not bow to outside pressure. That was why he was in prison. He spoke with power and authority and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. He was not the **James 1:6-8**, kind; tossed here and there by the wind (false doctrines), double-minded and unstable.

Vs. 25

Luke 7:25, “²⁵But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are found in royal palaces!”

2. A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are found in royal palaces!

“Dressed in soft clothing” uses AMPHIENNUMI MALAKOS HIMATION and refers to fine or soft fabric that the well-off would be able to buy and wear. The answer to this question is also a resounding No! Because, John was neither rich nor dressed in fine clothing in the worldly sense, and actually dressed in camel hair clothing that was rough, rigid, and inexpensive, cf. **Mat 3:4**. He was not a worldly self-indulgent man. He faithfully denied himself to better fulfill his ministry. A secondary meaning of MALAKOS is “effeminate,” cf. **1 Cor 6:9**.

“Splendidly clothed” uses the Adjective ENDOXOS that means, “honored, highly esteemed, splendid, or glorious.” This was clothing made for the elite of the day.

“Live in luxury” uses the Verb HUPARCHO with the noun TRUPHE that means, “self-indulgence, luxury, reveling, enjoyment, delight, softness, or delicateness.” It too is a word that can relate to the “effeminate,” or even the fastidious person who is overly difficult to please, or the conceited, insolent, and scornful individual who wallows in luxury and detests other people. Yet, John was a rugged man of the wilderness, **vs. 24**, not one gorgeously attired

or living as those found in kings' courts.

Vs. 26

Luke 7:26, “²⁶But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet.”

3. A prophet? The answer to this question is a resounding Yes! But not just any old PROPHET, John was a prophet who faithfully spoke the message God gave him. He continually functioned inside the Plan of God, and was a great part of God's plan for salvation, as the forerunner to the Messiah.

4. One who is more than a prophet. But he was more than a prophet, because he was also the subject of prophecy. Other prophets would only say the Messiah was going to come. John had the privilege of saying, “The Messiah is here!” Up to that time, no human ever was given a higher honor than John the Baptist.

Vs. 27

Luke 7:27, “This is the one about whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send My messenger ahead of you, who will prepare Your way before You.’”

5. The one about whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send My messenger ahead of you, who will prepare Your way before You.’ Here, Jesus quotes **Malachi 3:1**, which is also noted in **Mat 11:10; Mark 1:2**. He said that that particular prophecy was fulfilled in John the Baptist. This had also been confirmed by prophecy to John's father, Zechariah, **Luke 1:76**. John would “**prepare** (KATASKEUAZŌ κατασκευάζω, “prepare thoroughly, make ready, build, furnish, or equip”), **your way before you,**” That prophecy also affirmed the deity of Jesus as both Lord and Messiah. Therefore, this messenger (John the Baptist) prepared the way for the Messiah. As such, Jesus used this to confirm that John announced the coming of Jesus, and therefore Jesus must be God's chosen Messiah, “The Expected One.” By reminding John of his own ministry, it would convince him that Jesus was the Messiah, answering his question. Therefore, he need not feel frustrated in prison. He had finished the work God sent him to do.

Vs. 28

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

Our Lord first commends John for his faithful obedience to God and His Plan of Salvation by stating, “**no one born of women is greater than John,**” using the Adjective MEIZON μείζων that means, “greater, even more, or of greater degree.” Therefore, this is a commendation of John by our Lord of John's faith and obedience to God, His Word, and His Plan for John's life. He is the greatest prophet, the greatest person, up to this time.

But we see a subtlety in this acclamation. John was “**born of women**” GENNETOS GUNE. In other words, he was born of flesh and blood, born of water; he was the greatest in his humanity. Therefore, he was the greatest human to ever be born physically, according to our Lord.

Our Lord then gives us a contrast, “**yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.**” To understand this phrase, we have to ask ourselves, “How does one enter into the kingdom of God, BASILEIA THEOS?” Did not John enter that Kingdom? Jesus tells us how to enter the Kingdom in **John 3:3-5**.

John 3:3-5, “Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?” ⁵Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water (physical birth) and the Spirit (spiritual birth) he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

Well didn't John believe in Jesus? Yes, he did! But, unfortunately for John he was born and died prior to the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord. As such, he was of the OT time period, the Age of Israel. Believers in that Dispensation did not receive what the believers in the Church Age receive, which is the power of the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit and being placed in union with Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit at the moment they believe in Jesus as their Savior.

Even though John was the greatest of the OT prophets (though his ministry is recorded in the NT), he lived during a time when believers were not placed in union with Jesus Christ at salvation. They were saved, but not "in union with Jesus Christ." John's greatness was that he functioned as a guide to prepare the people, get the people ready, for salvation as the forerunner to the Messiah. Yet, even though he had that tremendous privilege and responsibility, he was never "in union with Jesus Christ."

But won't John be in the Kingdom of God? Yes, he will be in the future / eschatological Kingdom of God, **Luke 13:28**.

Luke 13:28, "In that place (*the Eternal Lake of Fire*) there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out."

But that is not what Jesus is talking about in this passage. When Jesus says, "**Yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he,**" He is speaking to the kingdom of God that is made up of those who are born again, born of water and the Spirit, and being "in union with Jesus Christ," who are also called the Body of Jesus Christ. To better understand this, let us understand the use of "kingdom" in the NT.

"**Kingdom**" is the noun ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑ βασιλεία that can mean, "kingship, royal power, kingdom, dignity, or reign." In our passage, it is used with the "Kingdom of God," which speaks of the realm of God where the subjects are those who believe in Jesus Christ. When Jesus began to minister, He associated His message with the Messianic expectations that the "kingdom was at hand," **Mat 3:1-2; 4:17; 10:7; Mark 1:15; Luke 21:31**.

Mark 1:15, "And saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.'"

Jesus' preaching picked up on John's announcement that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" cf. **Mat 3:1-2; 4:17**. Jesus announced that the time of fulfillment had come both in and with the preaching of the gospel, with His healing of the sick, **Mat 4:23f**, and driving out evil spirits, **Mat 12:28; Luke 11:20**.

Mat 4:23, "Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people."

Mat 12:28, "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."

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

Jesus' preaching of the kingdom of God presented an overlapping of the present and the future "Kingdom," just as was seen in the OT. Jesus' announcement that the kingdom of God is "at hand" is thus not only a prophecy of the soon coming future Kingdom of God, it is also a declaration that the kingdom of God is actually present in the person of Jesus Christ. The King, Jesus, is present. Therefore, the Kingdom must also be here. As such, the Kingdom was manifested through the life and works of Jesus.

Obviously, this Kingdom is more than a physical, visible, tangible entity. Jesus stressed the inner, spiritual nature of the Kingdom. It belongs to the poor in spirit, **Mat 5:3**, and it comforts those who mourn. And as we noted above, only by being born again can one enter this Kingdom, **John 3:3-5**.

John 3:3-5, "Jesus answered and said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.' ⁴Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?' ⁵Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you,

unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

Therefore, the Kingdom that Jesus was speaking about saying that **“he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he”** is the present spiritual Kingdom found in Jesus Christ that includes those who believe in Him and are placed in union with Him. This relationship would not begin until after the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord. Because John would die before these took place, he was not part of that spiritual Kingdom that would be a main asset of the Church Age Dispensation. Because believers of our current Dispensation would be **“In Christ,”** and **“one in Christ,”** **2 Cor 1:21; 5:17; Gal 3:28**, they would be greater than John the Baptist who did not experience that union with Christ. cf. **Eph 5:5; 2 Tim 4:1; 2 Peter 1:11.**

Jesus was not depreciating John. He was explaining that though John was a great prophet, he would not be part of that spiritual Kingdom because he was only **“born of women,”** and not **“born of the Spirit,”** although he would be part of the yet future visible Kingdom, **Luke 19:11f.; 13:22-30.** Therefore, how is the least person in the kingdom of God greater than John? In position, not in character or ministry! Because of their union with Jesus Christ the King, they would be greater than John. Even though John was the herald of the King, announcing the kingdom, believers today are children of the kingdom and the friends of the King, **John 15:15.** This is seen further in the next verse regarding God’s justice.

Luke 16:16, “The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.”

“Farrar reminds us of the old legal maxim which says, “The least of the greatest is greater than the greatest of the least,” which is as much as to say that the smallest diamond is of more precious substance than the largest flint. The least born of the Holy Spirit (John 1:12-13 and 3:5) is greater than the greatest born of women. They are greater in station, privilege and knowledge. The dispensations rise like lofty steps, and the lowest that stand upon the New Testament dispensation are lifted above the tallest who rest upon the dispensation of Moses. This is perhaps prophetically suggested by Zechariah—Zech 12:8.]” (The Fourfold Gospel: or A Harmony of the Four Gospels.)

Zech 12:8, “In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them.”

“Geldenhuys writes: “He belonged to the period of preparation and had not yet learned to know Jesus as the Crucified One He will indeed ... share fully his place in the redemption and blessings achieved by him, but as regards his place in the unfolding of the divine revelation which culminated in Christ, he still belongs to the preparatory stage and is therefore in this respect less than the most insignificant believer of the New Dispensation.”” (New Commentary on the Whole Bible, Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown.)

The fact that God’s kingdom is both a present and future kingdom, a spiritual reality to be experienced now and a future eschatological event is a recurring theme throughout the NT. And we see that the spiritual Kingdom is made up of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, **Rom 14:17.**

Rom 14:17, “For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

These things show God is ruling in the life of the individual Church Age believer. The Kingdom is not merely in word, it is actualized in the Holy Spirit’s redemptive power, **1 Cor 4:20, “For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power.”**

And, as for the future / eschatological Kingdom of God, its visible manifestation will initially take place at the return of Christ when the Man of Sorrows returns with His kingdom. At Christ’s Second Coming, the Kingdom will arrive with power. At that time, a period of 1,000 years, the Millennium, will be established and be the interim period between the appearing of the Kingdom and its total arrival, **Rev 20:1f.** The Millennium reflects a convergence of the two dominant ideas of the “Kingdom” in first-century Judaism, a nationalistic/political kingdom and a cosmic/universal reign of Messiah. The common denominator is an expectation that Israel’s kingdom would be

restored in fulfillment of the OT prophecies about God's kingdom on earth in the end time, **Acts 1:6**.

Acts 1:6-8, "So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, 'Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?' ⁷He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; ⁸but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.'"

When the Kingdom is fully realized, it will be called Christ's kingdom, **Luke 22:29; 2 Tim 4:18; 2 Peter 1:11**, but **1 Cor 15:27-28**, states that at the end, Christ will give it back to the Father from whom He received it in the first place. With the consummation of the Kingdom, Jesus' Messianic function will come to a close. Throughout eternity the Kingdom's throne will be both God's and the Lamb's, **Rev 22:1**.

Luke 22:29, "And just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you."

2 Peter 1:11, "For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you."

1 Cor 15:27-28, "For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says, 'All things are put in subjection,' it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. ²⁸When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all."

Therefore, the least of the Church Age Dispensation, who is in union with Jesus Christ because of the grace of God, will be greater than John the Baptist, who was the greatest of the OT saints because of his obedience to God and His Plan. The greatness of the Church Age believer is found in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, who the Church Age believer has been made to be one with, as His body and wife for all of eternity. The greatness of the least is completely by the grace of God, not by works lest any man should boast, **Gal 2:16**.

Titus 3:5, "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit."

Eph 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

Gal 2:16, "Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified."

Col 1:13, "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son."

Vs. 29

Luke 7:29, "When all the people and the tax collectors heard this, they acknowledged God's justice, having been baptized with the baptism of John."

Literally this reads, "When all the people and the tax collectors heard this, they justified God." It reads like a rejoicing proclamation. It uses the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb ΔΙΚΑΙΩΩ δικαίωω that means, "justify, render innocent, or pronounce righteous." It was a forensic term meaning, "to make or establish as right, to judge, or to execute justice." Here, it is used for the sense of "proven right" as also found, **Mat 11:19; Luke 7:35**, and as "proven just" in our verse regarding God; cf. **Rom 8:33; 1 Tim 3:16**.

No one can nor needs to "justify" God and His actions, as all that He does is righteous and just. So, this means they recognized, understood, or acknowledged God's justice in that everyone had an opportunity for salvation and greatest

in the Kingdom of God. As we noted above, the greatness comes from being placed in Union with Jesus Christ, not by works. John had the greatest “works” as it were, being the greatest mortal born among women, but he was not of the Age / Dispensation when believers would be placed in union with Jesus Christ.

“**Tax collectors**” TELONES, is used once again for those who collected taxes for the Roman government and were despised by the people. It also represents “sinners,” in the Pharisees’ eyes, as also noted in **vs. 34**, which in reality represents all people, because all are sinners, **Rom 3:10, 23**. When Jesus said that the least in the Kingdom of God would be greater than John the Baptist, they understood the justice of God, which means, salvation is not based on our works or good deeds, but on the salvation plan of God, i.e., the person and work of Jesus Christ. Those who enter the kingdom of God are those who are saved through faith in the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior, and not by their works.

Rom 1:17, “**For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."** cf. **Rom 4:3/Gen 15:6; Rom 4:8/Psa 32:2; Gal 2:16**.

Gal 2:16, “**Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.**”

This is acknowledged in the last phrase, “**having been baptized with the baptism of John.**” John’s baptism was to identify the recipient with the Kingdom of God through the Messiah. Since these people received that Baptism, they would be identified with God’s kingdom once Jesus completed His work upon the Cross. The people viewed this “equal privilege and equal opportunity” for salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of God as being just, therefore, “**they justified God.**” Then, “**having been baptized with the baptism of John,**” means having believed in the just plan of God for salvation, they declared their confidence in God’s Plan by accepting John’s baptism. They believed and obeyed.

I am sure that this was viewed in their minds in contrast to what the Pharisees and Scribes were peddling. They were preaching a system of works for entrance into the Kingdom of God. John and Jesus were preaching “faith” in the Messiah’s work, as entrance into the kingdom of God. For the people, anyone could have that kind of faith, and they viewed it as being part of the Justice of God. But what the Pharisees were preaching was not attainable by all, and therefore was unjust! This leads into the next section where Jesus rebukes the unbelieving Pharisees and Scribes.

Section 3: Jesus’ rebuke of the unbelieving Pharisees, vs. 30-35.

Vs. 30

Luke 7:30, “**But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God’s purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John.**”

Here, Luke uses for the first time “**lawyers,**” which is the Adjective NOMIKOS νομικός used as a Noun here that means, “lawyer, legal expert, jurist, notary, pertaining to the law, or according to law.” These lawyers are somewhat equivalent to the “Scribes” GRAMMATEUS that is a generic term and “lawyer” a specialized word for ones skilled in law and jurisprudence of the Mosaic Law. A similar word is NOMODIDASKALOS meaning, “doctor (teacher) of the law.” cf. **Luke 10:25; 11:45-46, 52; 14:3; Mat 22:35**. As such, NOMIKOS is used in the contexts of administering or understanding the Law of Moses.

In NT times, the NOMIKOS did three things:

1. They studied and interpret the Law. Due to the general nature of the Law, they clarified the Law in practical ways.
2. They taught the Law to the young Jewish men.
3. They had to act in decisions or questions about the Law. They acted as both judges and advisors to the court.

In our passage, like the Pharisees had done, they rejected Jesus as the Messiah by misinterpreting the Word of God,

which led to **“rejecting God’s purpose for themselves.”**

“Rejected” is the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb ATHETEO ἀθετέω that means, “nullify, reject, ignore, disregard, or make void.” It was used in regard “to breaking an agreement or a promise, and a breach of trust.” It commonly referred to “rejecting something/someone” or “disproving its validity.” cf. **Luke 10:16; John 12:48.**

Jesus said in **Luke 10:16**, **“The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”**

He also stated in **John 12:48**, **“He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.”**

In our passage, they were rejecting God’s **“purpose for themselves,”** where **“purpose”** is the Noun BOULE βουλή that can mean, “plan, purpose, advice, or design.” This is the first use of this word in the NT. In classical Greek, BOULE carries the meaning of a “well-thought-out decision of the will.” It also was used for an official gathering or assembly. In our passage, it represents God’s Plan for their lives as it also does in **Acts 2:23; 4:28; 13:36; 20:27; Eph 1:11; Heb 6:17.**

So, these men, who supposedly were experts of God’s Word, especially the Law of Moses, had completely misinterpreted that Word and as such rejected Jesus as their Messiah. As a result, they rejected “God’s plan for their lives,” as God had intended for them to be teachers and preachers of the Word in truth to teach the world about Jesus being the Messiah / Savior / King from the OT and the Law. These men could have had a tremendous impact on the world in God’s Plan, if they walked inside of God’s plan for their lives. Yet, they did not, having rejected God’s plan for their lives.

“Not having been baptized by John” was the sign of misinterpreting God’s Word that led to rejecting God’s purpose for their lives. Why did these men not get baptized by John? Remember, John’s “baptism,” was not just a process of an immersion into water. John’s baptism was the concluding ceremony to what he had first preached to the people. John had taught from the Word of God much about Jesus being the Messiah / Savior / King, and then invited those who believed in Jesus to come and be baptized. Remember Billy Graham. He did not invite people to come forward and accept Jesus as their Savior at the beginning of his revival meetings. No! He first taught the Gospel of Jesus Christ and then invited the people to receive Jesus as their Savior based on what they had heard and then believed.

So, this was not just a refusal to be baptized, it was a rejection of the Word of God that John was teaching. Like the Pharisees, in their self-righteous arrogance, they thought they knew the Word of God better than others, including John and Jesus. And why not, they were deemed experts of God’s Word, especially the Law of Moses; they were “Lawyers.” They thought they knew what a right relationship with God entailed. So, they rejected the teaching of John the Baptist and did not get baptized, with the result of rejecting God’s purpose and plan for their lives. First and foremost, they did not get “saved,” or “born again.” Secondly, as a result, they could not be used by God to preach and teach others the truth of God’s Word for salvation nor the correct spiritual walk in their lives.

Can you think of a more devastating statement than that? God had a plan for them, but they chose their own plans and purposes. Many people make that same tragic mistake every day.

In contrast, in **vs. 29**, the common people, including the tax collectors for the Romans, recognized John as God’s man with God’s message for them. They believed and were baptized.

Yet, for those who reject God’s plan and purpose for their lives, they become the kind of people Jesus describes in **vs. 31-34**. It does not matter whether an evangelist comes in a happy, kind way with the message of the gospel or if a preacher comes in a stern, direct way. Either way they reject the message, just as these Pharisees and Lawyers did with John and Jesus. They become the kind of people who commit themselves to themselves, their own interpretations, and their own way of trying to live the spiritual life, to their detriment.

2 Cor 10:12, **“For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves;**

but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.”

Jesus then gives a short parable to explain this in **vs. 31-34**. This is paralleled in **Mat 11:16-19**. In this parable, Jesus is using two comparatives to show the rejection of Him and God’s Plan for their lives of some of the people, especially the Lawyers / Scribes and Pharisees who in **vs. 30**, **“Rejected God’s purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John.”** As such, they were unsaved people.

In the first part of the parable, **vs. 31-32**, Jesus points out the unresponsiveness of the Scribes / Lawyers and Pharisees as they were like unresponsive, self-absorbed children.

Vs. 31

Luke 7:31, “To what then shall I compare the men of this generation, and what are they like?”

Here, Jesus says, **“To what,”** using the interrogative Pronoun TIS, and **“shall I compare,”** using the Future, Active, Indicative of the Verb HOMOIIOO that means, “make alike, be like, compare a person or a thing.” He then gives a generic object that He is speaking about, **“Men of this generation”** ANTHROPOS GENEAE. Therefore, Jesus is rebuking the **“men of this generation,”** meaning the self-righteous legalistic religious leaders and their followers, who have rejected Him and God’s plan of salvation.

Later, Jesus would further rebuke His unbelieving contemporaries by calling them “evil, adulterous, unbelieving, and perverse,” **Mat 12:39-45; 17:17; Luke 11:29 ff; Acts 2:40**. This reflects the LXX’s translation of the OT using GENEAE in connection with God’s judgment upon those rejecting Him, cf. **Luke 17:25; Heb 3:10; Psa 95:7-11**.

Vs. 32

Luke 7:32, “They are like children who sit in the market place and call to one another, and they say, ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.’”

Some call this, “The parable of the brats.” **“Children”** here is PAIDION that means, “infant, little, or young child.” It is used in contrast to the “children” in **vs. 35**, which is TEKNON. They are synonymous terms, but Jesus uses them to contrast the unbeliever in this verse, versus the believer in **vs. 35**. The context is what gives us this contrasting use.

“Sit in the market place” KATHEMAI HO EN AGORA is analogous to “living in the world,” i.e., Satan’s cosmic system.

Then we see the unresponsiveness of the Pharisees and those who follow them, in these two contrasting events that represent their unresponsiveness to God’s two messengers, John and Jesus. These two analogies of playing the flute and singing a dirge speak to children’s games that represent playing a wedding game and playing a funeral game, respectively.

In the first we see John, **“playing the flute”** (AULEO, “play the flute or wind instrument,” **Mat 11:17; 1 Cor 14:7**), called them to the Kingdom of God to be joined in union with, (i.e., be married to), the Savior.

In the second, Jesus **“sang a dirge”** (THRENEO, “mourn, lament, sing a dirge, or wail,” **Mat 11:17; Luke 23:27; John 16:20**), called them to join in the funeral procession that speaks to His death upon the Cross where He paid for our sins. It means, be identified with the death of Jesus Christ that purchased our sins for salvation.

Of the true believer and Jesus’ disciples He said in **John 16:20**, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy.”** Jesus’ disciples would be identified with His death upon the Cross, while the world would reject it / rejoice that He was no more.

In **Luke 23:27**, the women “lamented” for Jesus while carrying His Cross from Gabbatha to Golgotha. For this

occurrence it is helpful to compare KOPETOS that means, “lamentation for the dead” (in a ceremonial sense), that is used elsewhere, with our Verb THRENEŌ, because what the women did by accompanying Jesus was a form of burial procession. Therefore, they too were identified with Jesus’ death upon the Cross.

In both examples, there is unresponsiveness to the call. The first says “**You did not dance,**” and uses an interesting Greek word for “**dance**” ORCHEOMAI that is only used in this narrative in our verse and **Mat 11:17**, and in **Mat 14:6**; **Mark 6:22** for the daughter of Herodias who danced at Herod’s birthday party that led to the beheading of John the Baptist. So, it represents both a party and a death, as it contrasts the two events. But in our verse, “they did not dance,” means they did not participate in the wedding. They rejected the invitation.

The second act of unresponsiveness to the call is regarding a funeral that says, “**You did not weep**” that uses the word we have previously seen KLAIO that means, “weep, mourn, lament, cry, or show emotion.” We noted this in **Luke 6:21, 25**, that told us those who weep now, (i.e., identify with the death of Jesus Christ), will laugh/rejoice in life and eternity, as Jesus also encouraged the grieving mother in **Luke 7:13**; cf. **8:52**, while those who laugh now, (i.e., do not identify with the death of Jesus Christ), will weep in time and eternity due to their unsaved status. In **Luke 7:38**, we will see a beautiful picture of a great woman identifying herself with the death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In both scenarios, the people who did not believe were not responding in a sensible way to the message of the Kingdom. Jesus is subtly pointing out their rejection to accept His wedding invitation and being identified with His death, burial, and resurrection for salvation. They are in fact, rejecting God’s Plan of Salvation as they are rejecting the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As such, the Pharisees, Scribes, and their followers were unresponsive to the Gospel; they would neither dance nor weep.

Then, in **vs. 33-34**, Jesus compares what they said about John and Himself by pointing out their attacks on both of them in the form of insults and rejection, while also pointing out their hypocrisy. He points out the contrasting styles between John and Himself, just as the Pharisees did in **Luke 5:33**, yet they reject both of them.

Vs. 33

Luke 7:33, “For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon!’”

John did not “**eat bread**” ESTHINO ARTOS, nor “**drink wine**” PINO OINOS. This refers to the fact that he came with all the marks of the OT Nazarite Vow, a holy devotion to God, cf. **Num 6:1-8**; **Judges 16:17**; **1 Sam 1:11-28**; **Luke 1:13, 15**. Yet, the Pharisees criticized and rejected him, saying he had a “**demon**” DAIMONION, which meant he was demon possessed in their eyes.

They should have admired him for being so humble, sober, and self-denying. They should have sought him out because he was a man of character and observation, someone who obviously lived in the very presence of God. But, because of their self-righteous arrogance, they did not see truth or righteousness in John and declared that John had a demon spirit within him.

Vs. 34

Luke 7:34, “The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’”

Jesus then contrasts Himself to John and what the Pharisees said about Him. He first referred to Himself as “**the Son of Man**” HUIOS ANTHROPOS, that familiar title that told the people He was the “Expected One” the Messiah / Savior / King. Then He said He came “**eating**” ESTHINO, and “**drinking**” PINO in a contrast of style to John. This shows us that the “Son of Man,” Jesus, came as a sociable man, living / dwelling amongst the people, yet they insulted Him in 3 ways:

1. Irrespective, He too was insulted and rejected by them as He was called a “**gluttonous man**” PHAGOS

ANTHROPOS, where PHAGOS means, “one who is characterized by eating, lives to eat, or an excessive eater,” which is only used in this narrative in our verse and **Mat 11:19**.

2. Not only that but they called Him, “**a drunkard**,” with the Noun OINOPOTES οἰνοπότης that means, “a drinker of wine, or drunkard,” also only used here and **Mat 11:19**. Being coupled with PHAGOS makes it clear that the Pharisees were not merely saying Jesus drank wine in moderation, as was common at meals in those days, but that He was falsely characterized by excessive wine consumption, hence a drunkard. They falsely applied this principle to Jesus, **Prov 23:20**, “**Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine, or with gluttonous eaters of meat.**” This fulfilled a potential prophecy of Jesus from **Deut 21:20**, “**They shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’**”
3. Not only was He a glutton and a drunkard, but He was also “a friend of” PHILOS, “**Tax Collectors**” TELONES, and “**sinner**” HAMARTOLOS, “sinful, sinner, or even heathen,” i.e., the lowliest of society. This had to do with His multiple associations with them during His ministry; not entering into their sinful ways, but trying to save them from their sins. Jesus was recalling the event of **Luke 5:30-32**, “**The Pharisees and their scribes began grumbling at His disciples, saying, ‘Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?’**” ³¹And Jesus answered and said to them, “**It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. ³²I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.**”

As such, Jesus came with a compassionate heart that shared the life of the common people and showed the love of God through it. He associated with all types of people, including the Pharisees and lawyers **vs. 36-50**, even though He knew most of them did not like Him and would reject Him. He also fellowshiped with the despised tax collectors and sinners even though He knew he would be criticized by the elite Pharisees. The fact of the matter was that Jesus ate, drank wine, and was sociable without any sacrifice of principle and thus falsely accused of gluttony, drunkenness, and compromising with the sins of notorious evildoers. Unlike John the Baptist, Jesus entered into the social life of the people; He reached out in love to meet the needs of all. Yet, He was criticized and rejected, and eventually crucified for it.

In this passage and **Mat 11:16-19**, the Lord accused His generation of totally misunderstanding John the Baptist who lived sacrificially and managed without that which others felt was necessary. He also accused them of not understanding Himself for His behavior, which was socially acceptable. Therefore, that generation rejected both John and Jesus: the one because he was too unsocial, more like a demoniac living in the wilderness than a rational man; the other because He was too much the reverse, given to indulgences and consorting with the lowest classes of society. They had contrasting styles, yet both John and Jesus were insulted and rejected by the self-righteous. They refused to accept God’s messengers, which means they refused to accept God’s message, no matter which messenger presented it. **Luke 10:16**, “**The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.**”

And, because of their rejection of the message, they were actually destroying themselves and did not enter into God’s Plan for their lives.

Vs. 35

Luke 7:35, “**Yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children.**”

This verse is joined to the last verse in Matthew’s account, and has a different ending word, (**Mat 11:19b**, “**... Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.**”), where in Luke’s, it stands alone.

Here, “God’s plan for salvation,” is called “**wisdom**,” which is the Noun SOPHIA in the Greek. God’s Plan of Salvation is found in the person of Jesus Christ. That is why Jesus is called “**wisdom**” in **1 Cor 1:24, 30**. We could also call this “the Gospel,” message.

“**Vindicated**” is the same Verb we noted in **vs. 29**, DIKAIOO that means, “justify, render innocent, pronounce righteous.” Here, it is in the Aorist, Passive, Indicative for the dogmatic reality that God’s plan of salvation will receive acknowledgement of being “just,” it will be “reckoned as just,” or “pronounced just and righteous,” based

on the evidence being those who have accepted it (the wisdom of God, i.e., the Gospel of Jesus Christ), are entered into the Kingdom of God.

It provides an interesting play on words, where in **vs. 29**, the people rendered God as just based on His Plan of salvation having equal privilege and equal opportunity for all of mankind, and here, those who have accepted God's Plan for salvation will demonstrate the justice of God, especially to the unbelievers, simply by being in the Kingdom of God.

“Children” is the Greek Noun TEKNON that denotes a “child” and connotes the child-parent relationship. Here, it is used in regard to God the Father's relationship with all believers throughout human history called His children, who will be in His Kingdom forever, cf. **Mat 18:1-4; 19:13-14; John 1:12; 1 John 3:1**

John 1:12, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.”

Mat 19:13-14, “Then some children were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴But Jesus said, ‘Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’”

1 John 3:1, “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.”

So, this means that in the end, God's plan of salvation will be rendered and proclaimed just and right by the sheer fact that there will be millions or billions of people in the Kingdom of God, because they believed in Jesus Christ as the Messiah / Savior / King, which every member of the human race has the same opportunity to do.

Therefore, “the proof is in the pudding,” as we say, that means you can tell a wise decision by its results. In this case, we could change that idiom to say, “the proof is in the putting,” which means, believers in Jesus Christ who are placed in the Kingdom of God, will prove the righteousness and justice of God's plan for salvation. And as we have seen, the least of this Age, who believe, will be the greatest people in the kingdom of God because of their union with Jesus Christ. And, the greatest people of this world, (Satan's cosmic system), who disbelieve, will not even enter the kingdom of God. As such, which is wiser: faith in Jesus Christ or unbelief?

Notice that Matthew ends this statement with the word **“deeds.”** **“Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”** There, the most reliable ancient texts have ERGON that means, “work, deed, action, occupation, task, thing, or matter.” This word is first used in the NT, in **Mat 5:16** that provides context, **Mat 5:16, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”**

We next see it in **Matthew 11:2, “Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples.”** And then it is used in this verse **Mat 11:19.**

Luke uses it only twice, **Luke 11:48** for evil deeds, and in **Luke 24:19** for the righteous deeds of Jesus.

Luke 24:19, “And He said to them, ‘What things?’ And they said to Him, ‘The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people.’”

As you know, “good deeds,” also speaks to Divine good production, the “Fruit of the Spirit,” which is what Jesus accomplished throughout His ministry. As such, all that Jesus did, had the intent and goal to bring people into the Kingdom of God. Therefore, all that are entered into that Kingdom, especially those who are placed in union with Jesus Christ, are called God's children, which is also His fruit. And, the presence of these children / fruit in the Kingdom of God, will vindicate God's grace plan of salvation, in contrast to the “work for your salvation” plan the Pharisees believed in and were peddling. Therefore, “wisdom” SOPHIA, i.e., God's plan of salvation through the person and work of Jesus Christ upon the Cross, will be “vindicated,” proven and pronounced as just, by all her “children,” the believers in Heaven, which is Jesus' and God's Divine good production, the Fruit of the Spirit.

John 6:29, “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’”

This truth is illustrated in the following incident, **vs. 36-50**.

III. The Ministry of the Son of Man to Men, Luke 4:14-9:50.

D. Activities of His Ministry, Luke 7:1-9:50.

4. Ministry to sinners, Luke 7:36-50.

- a. The prelude, the woman anointing the feet of Jesus, **vs. 36-39**.
- b. The Parable of two debtors, **vs 40-43**.
- c. The object lesson revealed, **vs. 44-50**.

a. The Prelude, the Woman Anointing the Feet of Jesus, vs. 36-39.

A similar, yet different, story of a woman (one of the Mary’s) anointing Jesus at Bethany is told in **Mat 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8**. That anointing occurred in Bethany just days before the Crucifixion. This first anointing was in or around Capernaum near the beginning of Jesus’ ministry.

Vs. 36

Luke 7:36, “Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee’s house and reclined *at the table*.”

After having been accused of eating and drinking with sinners and called a glutton and drunkard, Jesus was asked by one of the Pharisees, (named Simon, **vs. 40, 43-44**), to dine / eat (PHAGO) with him. Jesus accepted his invitation by entering this man’s home and reclining at his table, even though this man most likely rejected John’s and Jesus’ invitation to be joined in union with Jesus and be identified with His death for salvation.

“While Jesus’ ministry of teaching and healing continued to ignite Galilee, drawing multitudes of followers, the Pharisees felt increasingly marginalized. Every time Jesus exercised His divine authority, their credibility waned. Each time Jesus forgave a sinner, the religious leaders lost their power to condemn. He contradicted their teaching, exposed their pride and hypocrisy, rejected their interpretation of Scripture, exposed the errors in their traditions, and even ridiculed them as petulant little brats. Nevertheless, a Pharisee invited Jesus to a banquet.” (Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary - Luke.)

“**Reclined**” is the Aorist, Passive, Indicative of the Verb KATAKLINO that means to, “recline at table, cause to lie down, or sit or lie down to eat.” It is only used by Luke here and in **Luke 9:14-15**, for feeding the 5,000; **Luke 14:8**, for accepting an invitation to a wedding feast; and **Luke 24:30**, for the Last Supper when He broke the bread. All three remind us of the previous section of being identified with Jesus in marriage and His death.

“Simon’s hospitality was not extended because he loved Jesus or because he actually believed in Him. It seems he was merely curious and wanted to see what manner of man Jesus was. Or, it could have been that he wanted to spy on Jesus or catch Him in some act or utterance. For whatever reasons Jesus was invited, He accepted. He went to Simon's house because He loved Simon and wanted to call him to repentance.” (Complete Biblical Library Commentary - Luke.)

Vs. 37

Luke 7:37, “And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining *at the table* in the Pharisee’s house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume,”

This “**woman**” GUNE, is identified only as “**being a sinner**” HAMARTOLOS, cf. **vs. 39**. Some have speculated she was a prostitute but that cannot be verified. “Sinner” is a generic term with a broad range of possibilities from not keeping the Law in the Pharisee’s mind, to being a heathen, and everything in-between. Nevertheless, apparently the Pharisee knew who she was.

“**Alabaster vial of perfume**” is ALABASTRON, “a box made of alabaster or a vessel for perfume,” with MURON that means, “ointment, perfume, sweet oil, or a healing ointment, salve, balm, lotion, cream, etc.” MURON is the juice like aromatic extract from plants, or perfumed oil. As a cosmetic, it could be translated “perfume.” “Ointment” is perhaps a useful English translation, since MURON was often medicinal and at times cultic in significance, being used for anointing (e.g., for burial in the embalming process). Nevertheless, this gesture of devotion came at considerable cost, because the ointment was very expensive, and the alabaster box was also costly, being made of a fine, translucent stone.

As such, when this unnamed woman anointed Jesus’ feet, she signaled her recognition of Jesus as Lord and His work upon the Cross that would result in His death. So, this was a preparation for His burial, as she was also identifying herself with Christ’ death (singing a dirge, **vs. 32**). She stands in stark contrast to the Pharisee Simon who did not recognize who Jesus truly was, cf. **Luke 7:44-47, 49**.

Vs. 38

Luke 7:38, “And standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume.”

Here, we have four acts that capture the essence of what we have seen thus far in **Chapters 6 - 7**. Luke uses the Imperfect, Active, Indicative of the verbs in this scene for “weeping, wiping, kissing, and anointing” to indicate the continuous actions of this woman.

1. This sinful woman was “**weeping**” KLAIO, “weep, mourn, lament, cry, etc.,” and “**wet His feet**” BRECHO PODOS, literally it is, “caused to rain on His feet,” “**with her tears**” HO DAKRU. So, the water works were really turned on, in this scene, which tell us she recognized that she was a sinner and she needed a savior. It was her “mourning or weeping now,” as we have previously noted in **Luke 6:21**, that those who weep now will laugh/rejoice in eternity. This, along with the next act, reminds us of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples in **John 13**, that was an object lesson of the forgiveness of our sins both positionally and experientially.
2. Then she “**kept wiping them with the hair of her head**” EKMOSSA, “wipe or wipe off,” with THRIX “hair,” HO KEPHALE “head.” She kept wiping off the water from His feet with the only towel she had, the long tresses of her own hair. Interestingly, hair being the woman’s glory, she wiped Jesus’ feet by placing her glory at His feet, **1 Cor 11:15**, “**But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For her hair is given to her for a covering.**” So, she laid her glory at the feet of Jesus, which glorified Him. In other words, she humbled herself before God!
3. “**And kissing His feet**” KATAPHILEO, “To kiss affectionately or repeatedly,” HO PODOS “His feet.” Her tender, repeated kissing of Jesus’ feet demonstrated her deep reverence for Him. This was her identification of union with Jesus Christ; Dancing at the wedding, **vs. 32**.
4. “**And anointing them with the perfume**” ALEIPHO HO MURON. This was a form of preparation of burial, as she identified with His death; the sing of a dirge, **vs. 32**. We see this preparation for the literal burial of Jesus in **Mark 16:1; Luke 23:66; cf. John 12:7**.

ALEIPHO is not the common word for anointing someone for position or service. That use was found with CHRIO, where CHRISTOS comes from. This was used more for spreading of an ointment for medicinal purposes, **Mark 6:13; James 5:14**, which means to bring healing, which is also what Christ did for us by paying for our sins upon the Cross. Yet, this word was used in the LXX of the OT in **Ex 40:15; Num 3:3** for anointing someone to the priesthood, which is also in view regarding Jesus Christ as our Great High Priest.

Ex 40:15, “And you shall anoint them even as you have anointed their father, that they may minister as priests to Me; and their anointing will qualify them for a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations.”

“What courage must it have taken for her to enter this Pharisee’s home? What hope must have been in her heart when she gathered her most expensive possession, an alabaster flask of ointment? What brokenness must have rushed

up in her heart and mind as she stood behind Jesus “weeping” (v. 38)? She knew she was a sinner better than anyone else did.” (Christ-Centered Exposition - Exalting Jesus in Luke.)

Vs. 39

Luke 7:39, “Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, ‘If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner.’”

Simon did not say this out loud, but “to himself.” This sets up Jesus’ response as He, who is God, knows the thoughts and intentions of a man’s heart, **Acts 15:8; Heb 4:12.**

Acts 15:8, “And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us.”

Simon thought disparagingly about Jesus, “**if this man were a prophet**,” which uses the 2nd class “if” statement meaning, “if and he is not,” in the eyes of this Pharisee. This means that the Pharisee did not think Jesus was a Prophet, PROPHETES, because if He were, He “**would have known**” GINOSKO, “**who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner.**” Even though Jesus performed innumerable miracles, healings, exorcisms, and resurrections, this legalistic self-righteous arrogant Pharisee doubted that Jesus was a true prophet, because in his mind, true prophets would not associate with such people like this. But these are exactly the type of people Jesus came for!

b. The Parable of Two Debtors, vs 40-43.

Jesus then goes on to explain this to the Pharisee in a parable about two men who had a debt to another. One owed 500 denarii, (500 days of wages), and the other 50 denarii (50 days of wages).

Luke 7:40, “And Jesus answered him, ‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’ And he replied, ‘Say it, Teacher.’” This Pharisee’s name is now revealed, “Simon,” which was a very common name in that day, as Peter’s name was Simon, and in the other Gospels of the anointing of Jesus with perfume, we see a Simon the Leper.

Simon concluded that Jesus could not be a Prophet because He had not discerned the woman was a sinner. So now, Jesus proved a greater discernment than knowing the sins of the woman by knowing the thoughts of Simon himself! But I don’t think Simon got it!

Notice Simon calls Jesus “teacher” DIDASKALOS, which He was, but of all the titles for Him, this was the least. So, we see Jesus being demoted in this man’s mind from prophet to teacher.

Luke 7:41, “A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.” This is the object lesson compared to our sins. Some have more, and some have less debt before God.

“**Debtor**” is the Noun CHREOPHEILETES χρεωφειλέτης, from CHREOS “debt,” and OPHEILETES “one who owes,” that is from the Verb OPHEILO “owe or be indebted.” CHREOPHEILETES is used only here and **Luke 16:5**. Both of these occurrences include a sense of mercy on the part of the one who forgave the debt, as well as a sense of relief for the one forgiven.

Luke 7:42a, “When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both.” This is the object lesson of the forgiveness of our sins: that Jesus will pay for all sins and God will forgive all sins in Jesus. Some people will have many sins forgiven, because of their many sins in life, while others fewer, yet all are paid for in full!

“**Forgave**” is the Aorist, Middle, Indicative of the Verb CHARIZOMAI χαρίζομαι that means, “give generously, grant, bestow; remit, forgive, release, or pardon.” It is utilized by only Luke and Paul. Luke understood it as the demonstration of our Lord’s “gracious giving,” His “bestowing favor” upon candidates for salvation. In our passages with a story about canceled debts, it is the outworking of God’s “grace” CHARIS, as He “grants” sight to the blind, **Luke 7:21**, and illustrates God’s gracious granting of repentance and forgiveness to all who would believe.

Luke 7:42b, “So which of them will love him more?” With the answer being so obvious, the self-righteous Pharisee will condemn himself. **“Will love him more”** uses AGAPAO in analogy for Category one love; Love towards God, as a result of the forgiveness of our sins, which is what Simon states in the next verse.

Luke 7:43, “Simon answered and said, ‘I suppose the one whom he forgave (CHARIZOMAI) more, (PLEION, “more or greater”).’ And He said to him, ‘You have judged, (KRINO), correctly, (ORTHOS, “rightly, correctly, or properly”).’”

The Pharisees were so caught up with being holy and righteous through their own works that they would condemn those who were not like them, and would do nothing to help them overcome their sin other than condemn them or humiliate them into submission.

Yet, Jesus, coming with compassionate love, did everything necessary to help the sinner overcome their sins, by paying for them upon the Cross.

c. The Object Lesson: The Pharisee’s Rejection, vs. 44-50.

Jesus then explains the parable by relating it to this woman, her sins, and her response to having her debt forgiven, in comparison to Simon’s treatment of Jesus, indicating his rejection of Jesus as Prophet / Savior / Messiah / King.

Luke 7:44, “Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.’”

Simon is rebuked for his uncompassionate treatment of Jesus, who was not “a sinner” like this woman was, in Simon’s eyes. He did not honor Jesus, even as a common guest. We see first that Simon did not recognize he was a sinner who needed a Savior; washing for forgiveness of sin.

Luke 7:45, “You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet.”

Secondly, Simon did not have love for Jesus and did not identify with the union he could have had with Christ.

Luke 7:46, “You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume.”

Thirdly, Simon did not identify with the death of Jesus for the payment of his sins.

Luke 7:47, “For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.”

Because this woman: 1) Knew she was a sinner and needed a Savior, 2) Laid her glory at the feet of Jesus to glorify Him, i.e., humbled herself before God; 3) Identified herself with the Union with Jesus Christ, and 4) Identified herself with the death of Jesus Christ, she received “forgiveness of her sins.” As such, she was forgiven much and therefore loved Jesus and God very much!

Yet Simon, in his arrogance, did not think he needed forgiveness and therefore did not have love for Jesus or God. He rejected the purpose of God for his life, **vs. 30.**

Luke 7:48, “Then He said to her, ‘Your sins have been forgiven (APHIEMI).’”

Luke 7:50, “And He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace.’”

This woman was not saved because of the works she performed in weeping, wetting, wiping, kissing, and anointing Jesus. She was forgiven of her sins because she believed in Jesus as her Savior / Messiah / King. Her faith led her to do good works in appreciation for what she had received. Her faith was demonstrated by her good works.

Luke 7:49, “Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, ‘Who is this man who

even forgives sins?”

This caused the people who were at the dinner party to marvel at Jesus and question in their minds who He was. Apparently, they did not believe in Him as the Savior prior to this event, but because of this event, it gave the cause to ponder who He was, hopefully to the point of salvation by believing in Him. This was Jesus' ultimate goal for accepting the invitation to and attending the dinner party.