

Luke 1:1

THE ARGUMENT

Concerning the penman of this history, the certain time when he wrote it, and the occasion of his writing of it, we have little in holy writ; and there is such an uncertainty in traditions, as it is hardly worth the labour to transcribe what men have but guessed at. For those who would have him to be Barnabas, or one of the seventy, they seem not to have considered what Luke himself saith, Lu 1:2, that he wrote, *as they delivered them to him, which from the beginning were eye witnesses, and ministers of the word.* By which is fairly hinted to us, that he was no eye witness, nor (from the first at least) a minister of the word. That there was one Luke contemporaneous with Paul, and his fellow labourer, appeareth from 2Ti 4:11 Phm 1:24 Col 4:14; in both which latter texts he is joined with Demas, and in Col 4:14, he is called *the beloved physician*. Those three texts seem all to speak of one and the same person, who, probably, at first practised physics, afterwards, being made a disciple, exercised the ministry. It is generally thought that this was he, who was the penman both of this history and of the Acts of the Apostles. Whether by nation he was a Syrian, or a Roman, or of what other nation, is but an unprofitable speculation. That he was an evangelist we know, that is, one inspired by God to transmit to the world the history of the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Saviour; as also of the acts of the apostles, until Paul was a prisoner at Rome. For his history of the Gospel, so far as it relates to Christ himself, it containeth many remarkable things, not mentioned by the other evangelists. The generation of John Baptist; the history of Zacharias; the angel's coming to the blessed virgin; Elisabeth's exclamation, and salutation of her; the publication of Christ's birth to the shepherds, with the things spoken by them; the testimony which Simeon and Anna gave to Christ; the occasion of Joseph and Mary's going to Bethlehem; the circumstances of our Saviour's birth there; his disputing with the doctors at twelve years of age; are things reported by no other evangelist, and of great use to complete the history of John the Baptist and of Christ. Besides that he hath many parables (as those of the lost sheep, the lost goat, and of the prodigal, &c.) that are to be found in no other evangelist, together with several other parables and pieces of history; to say nothing of divers circumstances in those parables and pieces of history, which other evangelists have recorded, omitted by them. He dedicates his

book to some friend, either named Theophilus, or to whom the signification of that name (which is, *a lover of God*) in his judgment did very well agree. The time when he wrote it is uncertain; some would have it to be written the fifteenth, some the twenty-second, some the twenty-seventh year of our Saviour. The matter written by him is of much more concern to us to know than these circumstances. We have in our annotations spoken to those things which he mentions, before recorded by Matthew or Mark, more shortly. To other things which we in him first meet with, more largely.

Chapter Summary

Lu 1:1-4 Luke's preface.

Lu 1:5-17 An angel appeareth to Zacharias, and promises him a son in his old age.

Lu 1:18-23 Zacharias doubting is struck dumb for a sign.

Lu 1:24-25 His wife Elisabeth conceives.

Lu 1:26-38 The angel's visit to Mary.

Lu 1:39-45 Elisabeth, saluted by Mary, prophesieth.

Lu 1:46-56 Mary's song of thanksgiving.

Lu 1:57-63 The birth and circumcison of John the Baptist.

Lu 1:64-66 Zacharias's mouth is opened.

Lu 1:67-80 His prophecy.

Ver. 1-4. Luke's evangelical history hath this peculiar to itself, that whereas the histories of the other evangelists are written to the whole world, having no particular inscription, or dedication, Luke dedicates his to a particular person, named Theophilus; for though that name signifieth *one that loveth God*, yet I cannot think it is to be taken here appellatively, it being commonly used as a proper name; parents in former ages giving children names generally either expressive of their children's duty to God, (that by their names they might be put in mind of it), or expressive of God's mercy to themselves in giving them such children. The evangelist here suggests, that many had taken in hand orderly to write an account of the things which were certainly believed amongst the Jews. Some think that Luke here reflects upon some that, even so early, had given false accounts of our Saviour's history; for there were several pretended Gospels wrote, called, The Gospel of the Nazarenes, of Thomas, Matthias,

Nicodemus, and many others, which the church soon saw cause to reject. But others think that Luke doth not at all reflect, and possibly those figments were not so early; but Luke, observing that many did write this famous history, and some, possibly, for want of due information, not so exactly as they might, yet as they were delivered to them from such as *from the beginning were eye witnesses, and ministers of the word*, but possibly might not be able so exactly to inform them, or the writers not so able duly to digest them (for most think Matthew, Mark, and John wrote after); or possibly because, there being then no printing, but all in manuscripts, because he thought his friend Theophilus (to whom he knew such a history would be grateful) might not have come to the sight of those manuscripts, he undertakes (not without the direction of the Holy Spirit, as appeared afterward) to compile a history of these things, to which he was either encouraged by the example of others, or incited by the mistakes of those who had done it ill, having the advantage perfectly to understand all things from the first. Most think that this advantage arose not from his personal knowledge, but his converse with the apostles and other ministers of Christ; for he saith no more, Lu 1:2, than, *even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye witnesses, and ministers of the word*; by which it seemeth to be hinted to us, that he was no eyewitness, nor minister of the word. To understand by *the word* in that verse Christ (whom John indeed so calleth, Joh 1:1) seemeth to me too hard, considering *the word*, in the evangelists, doth ordinarily signify the gospel, and no where Christ but in Joh 1:1,2, &c.

That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed; that is, by the relation of others. Before I pass this preface, I shall make some observations upon it.

1. That even from the beginning there were some cheats, in reporting matters of fact concerning the church. Whether Luke intended to reflect on them, or not, if we may believe any thing of ecclesiastical history, there were some false Gospels; and before the time of the Gospel there were apocryphal writings relating to the history of the Old Testament. No writings but the Scriptures deserve our faith (otherwise than they agree with them) in things of which they give us an account.
2. In Luke's time the history of the Gospel was most surely believed, as being delivered from eyewitnesses.

3. Men ought to have perfect understanding of matters of fact before they write them. Whoso writes a history upon uncertainty, imposes upon all future ages.
4. A knowledge of certainties is what all good men ought to aim at in writing and reading. It is a mean soul that can feed upon an uncertainty, and they are as mean that spend their time in catering such food for reasonable souls. Men's understandings are given them for nobler uses than to gain the notion of a falsehood, and they are low born souls that can spend their precious hours in such cookery let the sauce with which they serve it up be never so artificial.

Luke 1:5

Ver. 5. The Holy Ghost, for infinitely wise reasons, giveth us here an account both of the time when John the Baptist was born, and also of his parentage. It was *in the days of Herod, the king of Judea*, that is, he who was the son of Antipater: not Herod the tetrarch of Galilee, of whom you read Lu 3:1, who put John Baptist to death, that was thirty-one or thirty-two years after this. He is usually called Herod the Great; who fought his way to the government of the Jews under the Romans, and came to his throne by the slaughter of the Jewish Sanhedrim; by which means he also extinguished all the government, which till his time held in the tribe of Judah, though not in a single person, (for that was destroyed in John, soon after the time of Judas Maccabeus), yet in a select number out of that royal tribe. So that in this Herod's time the prophecy of dying Jacob, Ge 49:10, was fulfilled. The sceptre, that is, the government, departed from Judah, and the lawgiver from his feet, which was a certain sign (in order to the fulfilling of that prophecy) that Shiloh, that is, the Messias, was coming. This for the time.

A certain priest, named Zacharias; some will have him to have been the high priest, or his deputy, but that cannot be, for the high priest was but one, and so not within the courses of the priests, but of the eldest family

from Aaron; and though it be said, Lu 1:9, that *his lot was to burn incense*, yet it must not be understood of the incense mentioned Le 16:12, to be burned upon the yearly day of expiation, (which indeed none but the high priest might do), but of the daily incense mentioned in the law, Ex 30:7,8, which any of the priests did in their courses. This Zacharias was *of the course of Abia*. The eldest son of Aaron was always the high priest; his other sons were priests. In a long course of time, their descendants so multiplied, that they were too many all at the same time to minister in the temple. David therefore divided them into courses; each course waited their month. 1Ch 24:4,5, there is an account of the distribution of the priests into twenty-four courses. In David's time the eighth course was the course of Abijah. It appeareth by Ne 12:1-47, that after the captivity they kept the denominations of these courses, but it is probable the order of them was altered. We read of Abijah in Ne 12:17, but whether his was then, or at this time when Luke wrote his Gospel, the eighth course I cannot tell. It is enough for us that Zacharias was one of the ordinary priests of the course of Abia; whose office it was to serve in the temple in his course, which was the course of such as derived from the Abijah mentioned in 1Ch 24:10.

And his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. This is added not to signify Zacharias's obedience to the Divine law, which obliged the priests to marry within their own tribes; for the reason of that law being only to prevent the confusion of the inheritances, which fell by lot to the several tribes, and by the will of God were to be so kept distinct, the tribe of Levi having no such inheritance, might intermix with any other tribe, and did so; the high priest only was obliged to marry one of his own people, Le 21:14, and Jehoiada, 2Ch 22:11, married one of the tribe of Judah; but it is added to show the honourableness of Elisabeth's stock. Moses and Aaron were the two first governors of the Israelites. Elisabeth was not only of the tribe of Levi, but descended from Aaron, whom God made the noblest family of the Levites. Her name was Elisabeth. It is a Hebrew name, Ex 6:23, and (as you may see there) was the very name of Aaron's wife, the *daughter of Amminadab*, and *sister of Naashon*. As it may be variously written it signifieth, *the rest*, or *the oath*, or *the rod of my God*.

Luke 1:6

Ver. 6. That they were not righteous by a perfect legal righteousness, being not guilty of any sin, is certain, for so *there is none righteous, no, not one*; but so righteous, as that God accepted them, and looked upon them as righteous; as Abraham believed, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, though he sinned in the denial of his wife, &c.; or as it is said of David, 1Ki 15:5, *He did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him, all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah.* They also walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. A man's blameless conversation before the world is a piece of his righteousness, but will not make up alone such a righteousness as will testify his acceptation with God, or righteousness before him; he must, in the first place, walk in the commandments and in the ordinances of God. There is a duty towards God, as well as towards men; and that duty lies in the keeping his commandments, his ordinances, for the fear of the Lord must not be taught us by the precepts of men: yea, and in all the ordinances of God, having a respect to all God's commandments; and making this his constant course and practice, not doing it by fits. He must also be blameless towards men. Here is a true pattern of what a married couple should be, especially where the husband waits at the altar, and is employed in the holy things of God. *A bishop must be blameless, 1Ti 3:2; a deacon grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, Lu 1:8; blameless, Lu 1:10; and, Lu 1:11, Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, &c.* Such were Zacharias and Elisabeth. Such ought all ministers of the gospel and their wives to be.

Luke 1:7

Ver. 7. Amongst all earthly blessings, there is nothing we more desire than children, in whom we have a kind of perpetuity, living in our species and in our posterity when we are dead in nature. But as God, for our trial, doth often deny us other good things which are the great objects of our desires, so he doth often deny his own people this great blessing. Sometimes he withholdeth it a long time from those to whom he at length giveth it. Barrenness in Israel was a reproach: see Lu 1:25, and 1Sa 1:6. There was a promise to Abraham of a plentiful seed; hence, amongst the Jews, she that

was barren hardly thought herself, or was judged by others, a genuine daughter of Abraham. Both Zacharias and Elisabeth *were now well stricken in years*. God chooseth this woman, naturally barren, and now aged also, to be the mother of John the Baptist, therein working a double miracle; and it is observable in holy writ, that when God denied to any women children for some long time, and then opened their wombs, they were the mothers of some eminent persons, whom God made great use of. Thus it was with Sarah, Rachel, the wife of Manoaah, Hannah, 1Sa 1:1-28, and this Elisabeth.

Luke 1:8

Ver. 8,9. The priests were multiplied to an exceeding number; we find an account of more than four thousand upon the return out of the captivity of Babylon, Ezr 2:36-39; they were doubtless afterward multiplied to a far greater number. Josephus tells us there were a thousand in a course; whether they held to twenty-four courses, as in David's time, or no, I cannot tell. There were several parts of the priestly office, which it seemeth, by this text, the priests of the course that ministered divided amongst themselves by lot. One part of their work was to burn incense morning and evening. It seems this was that part of the priestly office which Zacharias was by lot to exercise.

Luke 1:10

Ver. 10. We are told, that the order of the Jewish daily service was this: twice in the day the priests whose course it was to minister, or such of them whose lot it was, went into the holy place to burn incense, according to the law, Ex 30:7. When they went in, a bell rung, to give notice that it was the hour of prayer. There were constantly there,

1. The rest of the priests of the same course.
2. The Levites.
3. Their stationary men, who represented the whole congregation, and laid

their hands upon the beast slain.

4. So many more of the people as would voluntarily come; and it was very ordinary for many to go.

Thus we read, Ac 3:1, of Peter and John going into the temple at the hour of prayer. These made the *multitude*, of whom it is said, that while the priest was burning incense they were *without*, not without the temple, but in the court of Israel, without the holy place, in which the priests were burning incense, *praying*; so they used to do privately by themselves. There is a text in Ecclesiasticus, Ec 1:15, which (though it be not canonical Scripture) is as credible as any other civil history, and will much help to make the readers understand the order of the Jewish service, and what this text saith.

Luke 1:11

Ver. 11. Though we translate it *appeared*, yet in the Greek it is, there was seen of him. An angel indeed was there; whether the angel Gabriel or not, or in what form he appeared, it is not said. It is by some observed, that until the Urim and Thummim ceased, no angel appeared to any priest executing his office; after this, it is observed by others, that most appearances of angels to the priests were when they were employed in their service in the temple.

Luke 1:12

Ver. 12. We are naturally affrighted at sudden and unusual things, but especially at any Divine appearances, whether God himself takes a shape, or authorizes an angel to do it. So was Daniel, Da 10:7,8; and Manoah and his wife, Jud 13:20; and Paul, Ac 9:1-18. For though God doth not make these appearances to affright us, yet such is the imbecility of our natures, that we cannot but be shy at them, and start from them; and it is but reasonable that God should by this means both declare his own glory and majesty, and also humble his poor creatures, and make them more impressive, and receptive of his Divine revelations. It is reasonable God should keep and declare his majesty, though we keep and declare our

infirmity.

Luke 1:13

Ver. 13. Although the great God useth so to show himself to the best of his own people, as to imprint upon them a sacred awe of his majesty, yet he never suffereth the souls of his people to sink under those apprehensions. The first words the angel saith to Zacharias are,

Fear not, Zacharias. I am no bad messenger to thee, but a good messenger from God, to tell thee *thy prayer is heard*. This is good news to any soul. But of what prayer the angel here speaketh is a little further question, for it follows, *and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son*. It is believed that the priest, while he burned incense, did offer up prayers, but that he had now offered up prayers to God for issue is not so probable, considering that both he and Elisabeth were well stricken in years, and probably past children. Some therefore think that those words, *and thy wife Elisabeth, &c.*, are given him only as a sign that his prayers were heard; and added to signify that, as a further mercy to him than what he asked, Elisabeth should conceive. Nor do I see any reason why we should restrain the prayer mentioned to the prayer he had now made, and not expound it of those many prayers which Zacharias had before made, which though God had delayed to answer, yet the angel assures him should now be answered with relation to issue.

And thou shalt call his name John, which is the same with Johanan in the Hebrew, and signifies *gracious*. The angel directed Joseph to call Christ's name *Jesus*, because he was to *save his people from their sins*; and he directeth Zacharias to call his son's name John, because he was to open the kingdom of grace, and to preach the grace of the gospel, through Jesus Christ.

Luke 1:14

Ver. 14. None ought to have so mean thoughts of these words of the angel, as to think that they are only expressive of that affection which commonly discovereth itself in us when God giveth us sons, especially after a long

barrenness, but of a further joy and gladness his parents should have upon a spiritual account, afterwards expressed.

Many shall rejoice at his birth: they rejoiced *in his light*, Joh 5:36, the glad tidings of the Messiah being come into the world, which he brought. The papists think they have a ground here for their holy day they keep to his honour, and their apish, carnal rejoicing, which certainly was not so valuable a thing as for an angel to foretell. The angel speaks of the great acceptance with the people (many of them) which John's doctrine should have, so that, as our Saviour saith, from his days the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent did take it by force. But he further openeth his meaning in the following verses.

Luke 1:15

Ver. 15,16. We have a natural ambition to be great, but it is only to be great in the sight of men; thence one man coveteth riches, another honours and reputation; but the true greatness is to be *great in the sight of the Lord*, who doth certainly judge with the truest and most infallible judgment. In God's sight he is a great man of whom God maketh a great use, especially in turning many souls to himself. Consider John separately from his work, and the concurrence of God with his work, he was a very little man, and so looked upon by the Pharisees and rulers, who would not believe in him. His father was an ordinary priest. For titles and dignities, he had none; John the Baptist was his highest title. For his clothing; he was not clothed in soft raiment, (as princes' chaplains), he was clothed with a skin, with *camel's hair, and had a leathern girdle about his loins;* yet Christ saith of him,

Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist. He had no palace, no stately habitation; he lived mostly in desert places little inhabited. Nature was his cook, that provided him locusts and wild honey. Where was his greatness, but in this—He was a great and faithful preacher of the gospel, and God blessed his labours to convert souls? They are little men that do little of the work for which God hath sent them into the world, and do little good in their generation.

He shall drink neither wine nor strong drink: by *strong drink* is meant any

drink which ordinarily intoxicates. This was the law of the Nazarites, Nu 6:3. It was forbidden the priests during the time of their ministrations upon pain of death, Le 10:9. No lovers of wine and strong drink can be great men in the sight of God. The minister of the gospel must not be one given to wine, 1Ti 3:3 Tit 1:7.

And he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. This is true, both as to prophecy, (which is all extraordinary gift of the Holy Ghost), and also of the Holy Ghost considered as a sanctifying Spirit renewing the heart.

And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. Then it seems there is another conversion besides the conversion of men from paganism. John (with the assistance of the Holy Ghost) was an instrument to turn many of the Israelites, who already verbally owned the true God, but were drenched in errors, and superstitions, and looseness of life, to the Lord their God, by repentance; and this he did by preaching both law and gospel to them. This made him a great man, for, *They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever*, Da 12:3.

Luke 1:17

Ver. 17. God was last spoken of, he must therefore be the *him* mentioned here, before whom John the Baptist was to go, according to the prophecy, Mal 4:5,6; from whence is an evident proof that Christ was the Lord our God, before whom John the Baptist came, *in the spirit and power of Elias*, and therefore he is called *Elias*, Mal 4:5, as expounded by Christ, Mt 11:14 Mr 9:13. The Jews' not understanding this keeps them in a vain expectation of a Messiah to this day, and of a personal coming of Elias before him. It is the observation of some learned men, that where the word *power* is added to *the Spirit*, or Holy Ghost, it signifies a more than ordinary measure and influence of the Spirit, as in Lu 1:35 Ac 10:38 1Co 2:4 1Th 1:5. But I rather think that by that phrase, *in the spirit and power*, here is meant, with the same zeal and frame of spirit that Elijah had. We have before, in our notes upon Matthew, showed in how many things John the Baptist was like Elijah, to say nothing of his habit and the severity of

his life, in respect of the most corrupt time wherein they both lived, their faithfulness in their ministry, their warmth and zeal in their work, their boldness, not fearing to reprove princes for their errors, &c.

To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. Malachi addeth, *and the heart of the children to their fathers;* instead of which Luke hath, *and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just;* that is, to bring both young and old to repentance: the hearts of the fathers amongst the Jews to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, their children; and the hearts of the Jews, which, with respect to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and David, are children, to the doctrine which they embraced, and the ways of God wherein those just men walked, which is the doctrine of wisdom: to reconcile many amongst the Jews to that which some of them own and profess, though others of them are yet apostatized, and yet led away with the superstitions of those degenerate and corrupt times.

To make ready a people prepared for the Lord; to acquaint this part of the world with the Messias, and to prepare them for receiving him and his doctrine, which is presently to be revealed by himself, taking off people's prejudices, and discovering and commending Christ to them. Or, by bringing men to a true repentance for their sins, and a sense of them, till which they cannot believe, to prepare them for a more internal reception of the Lord Jesus Christ. For John is said to have preached the doctrine of *repentance for the remission of sins;* and to have preached, saying, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* Also defaming the Pharisees, who were the great enemies of Christ, by detecting to the people their hypocrisy. Thus he made *ready a people prepared for the Lord.*

Luke 1:18

Ver. 18. The words are much the same with those of Abraham, Ge 15:8, *Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it,* viz. the land of Canaan? And Mary, Lu 1:34, when the same angel had told her she should have a child, Lu 1:31, saith, *How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?* Gideon also asked a sign, Jud 6:17. To our appearance and judgment there seemeth no great difference betwixt these and Zacharias in this place asking a sign, only Zacharias here opposeth his own sense and reason to the words of the angel, yet we shall hear a different issue of this question, or answer to it.

Luke 1:19

Ver. 19,20. It is by some observed, that before the captivity of Babylon we read of no name of any angel, who have no names as we have, but assume names to declare the nature of their ministration; and that Gabriel signifieth, the power, or the strength, of God, because the declaring of the gospel, which the apostle declares *the power of God to salvation*, Ro 1:16, seemeth to have been his peculiar ministration. We read of this Gabriel, Da 8:16 9:21, where we find him foretelling the Messiah, and the working of man's redemption; to which prophecies he doubtless refers Zacharias in saying,

I am Gabriel. We again shall meet with him Lu 1:26,27, six months after this, appearing to the virgin Mary, and telling her she should bring forth the Messiah. He addeth, *that stand in the presence of God*. As the good angels always behold the presence of our heavenly Father, (as our Saviour tells us), and are ready to be sent about his messages, (whence is the name of *angels*), they are called God's *ministers*, Ps 103:21 104:4.

And am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings: God sent me on purpose to declare this thing to thee. Which Zacharias might have known by the time and place when he appeared; at the time of prayer, at the altar in the holy place, where the evil angels used not to show themselves.

And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed. Divines have perplexed themselves to give a just account of this signal punishment of so good a man; whether they have said enough to satisfaction I cannot tell. Abraham, upon the same question, was gratified with a sign, Ge 15:8,9; so was Gideon, Jud 6:17. Where there is no difference in the words, or in a fact, there may be a great difference in the heart, and its inward habit and motions, from which those words proceed, and we must allow God to see that better than we can discern it by the words. Before Abraham's time, we read of no such experience of God's power in such cases, neither do we find that Abraham desired a sign as to this, that God would give him a child, but only as to the Lord's giving his posterity Canaan. Besides that, it is said, Lu 1:6, he

believed, and it was counted to him for righteousness; and the apostle extols his faith, Ro 4:19-21: Being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform. So as he asked not a sign for the begetting of a faith in him, he believed the Lord without a sight, only, fearing his own heart, he asked a sign for the further increase and confirmation of his faith. Besides, Zacharias's punishment was gentle, and of that nature that it also carried with it an answer to his desire: it was only the privation of speech, until the words of the angel should be fulfilled.

Because thou believest not my words. The words of God by his messengers are to be believed, and the not believing their words, which they speak truly from him, and as so sent, is a sin God will severely punish. It is all one not to believe God, as not to believe those whom he sends, speaking what he bids them.

Which shall be fulfilled in their season. The unbelief of men shall not make the word and promise of God of no effect; but God's promises have their seasons, before which we must not expect the accomplishment of them, Hab 2:3.

Luke 1:21

Ver. 21-23. While the priest was in the holy place, the people were in that part of the temple called the court of Israel, or the court of the people, praying: when he had done, he came out, and blessed them according to the law, Nu 6:23-26, where is the form of blessing which he used; for this the people waited before they went home. Whether the angel's discourse with Zacharias was longer, or his amazement at the vision made him stay longer than the priest was wont to stay, it is uncertain; but so he did, and when he came out he was not able to pronounce the blessing, nor to speak at all, only he beckons to them, by which the people judged that he had seen some vision. Yet dumbness being none of those bodily defects for which by the law they were to be removed from the priest's office, nor

having any great work in which he used his tongue during his ministration, which was more the work of the hands, he accomplished the days he was to minister, and then departed to his own house, for in the days of their ministration they had their lodgings in buildings appertaining to the temple.

Luke 1:24

Ver. 24,25. How long *after those days* the Scripture saith not, but it is probable it was soon after, as in the case of Abraham, and in the case of Manoah's wife, Jud 13:3, who conceived presently after the revelation.

And hid herself: not that she hid herself from seeing any person, but she concealed from those whom she saw the hopes that she had of her being with child, and perhaps what her husband had let her know by writing of the revelation he had from the angel: not that she herself doubted the thing, that were unreasonable to presume, after the seeing of her husband made dumb for a sign of it, and the next words will let us know the contrary; but to avoid the discourse of people upon so unusual a thing, who might possibly think her too vain in speaking of a thing so improbable and unlikely as this was. In the mean time she did not conceal herself from God, but said,

Thus hath the Lord dealt with me, ascribing it all to the power of God, who keepeth the key of the womb in his hand, and maketh the fruit of it his reward.

In the days wherein he looked upon me: it is the same with Lu 1:48,

He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. The favour of God to his creatures is oft expressed under this notion, Ps 25:18 Ps 84:9 119:132.

To take away my reproach among men. Barrenness is no more than a reproach amongst men; it was more especially a reproach to Jewish women, not only in regard of the expectation of being the mother of the Messias, (for none could expect that but a virgin, Isa 7:14, and she of the

tribe of Judah, to which the Messiah was promised, and one of the house of David, to whose family he was promised as a branch), but in regard of the special promise to Abraham, to whom a seed was promised, numerous as the dust, and as the stars, to which the barren woman could contribute nothing. It is a great mercy when God favoureth his people with any in evidences which take away their reproach amongst men, and a just cause for his people's thankful acknowledgment.

Luke 1:26

Ver. 26,27. In the sixth month, that is, after Elisabeth's conception; thus it is expounded afterward, Lu 1:36. *The angel Gabriel*, the same angel that had appeared in the temple to Zacharias, who seemeth to have had a special ministration with reference to that part of God's will which was predictive of the Messiah; he *was sent from God* (without whose command the angels do not move) *unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth.* There Joseph lived; from thence he went, Lu 2:4. The angel came to the virgin, who is here described by her name, Mary, and her relation, she was espoused to one Joseph, who is said to be *of the house of David.* Matthew reduces his genealogy to prove him to be so.

Luke 1:28

Ver. 28. Virgins betrothed, until the consummation of their marriage, were ordinarily kept in their friends' house: thither came this angel, and saith, *Hail, thou that art highly favoured.* The word translated *hail* signifies, Rejoice thou, or is as much as, God save thee. It is not the form of a prayer, (as the papists use it), but an ordinary salutation, as much as, God save you, or, Good morrow, is amongst us. *Thou that art highly favoured,* κεχαριτωμενη; the word comes originally from χαρις, which signifieth in Scripture two things:

1. The free love and favour of another bestowed on any: thus it is taken Lu 1:30 thou hast found favour. To the praise of the glory of his grace, Eph 1:6.

2. It signifies good habits in the soul; as 2Pe 3:18, *Grow in grace*; Col 3:16, *Singing with grace in your hearts*.

Hence the verb, a participle from which the word here used is, may signify, two things; either:

1. Thou hast received grace or favour from God, or,
2. Thou that art full of gracious habits.

The first seems to be its sense in this place: it followeth in the verse, *blessed art thou*; so also it is expounded Lu 1:30, *for thou hast found favour with God*. So as the virgin was the object of Divine grace, as we are, and therefore not to be prayed to as the fountain of grace; she herself had nothing but what she received. This whole verse seemeth to be only a salutation, there is nothing of a prayer in it; the angel doth only take notice of her as a favourite of Heaven, one dear unto his Lord, with whom God was in an especial manner, and whom God blessed above the rate of those ordinary blessings with which he blesseth other women.

Luke 1:29

Ver. 29. It seemeth that she did not only hear a voice, and saw an ordinary appearance, but the appearance of the angel was attended with some manifestation of the glory of God, which affected her, and made her wonder what the meaning of this should be, that God should send an angel to her, and with such a kind of salutation.

Luke 1:30

Ver. 30. This expounds those words, *thou that art highly favoured*, Lu 1:28, and lets her know that he came upon no ill design unto her, neither upon any human errand, nor yet with any message of evil tidings from God, for she was one for whom God had a favour.

Luke 1:31

Ver. 31-33. These three verses contain the substance of the angel's message or errand to the virgin, to tell her she should be the mother of *a Son*, by what name she should call him, and what he should be. In telling her this, who knew herself to be a virgin, one who had not known man, (as she expresses it, Lu 1:34), he plainly minds her that the prophecy, Isa 7:14, should be fulfilled in her. Thus far the angel's word signifieth a promise.

And shalt call his name Jesus: the angel saith the same to Joseph, Mt 1:21, and expounds it, adding, for he shall save his people from their sins; and thus the prophet expounds it, who saith, Isa 7:14, his name should be called *Immanuel*. There were two of this name before, Joshua and Jeshua, both of which were great types of Christ, as being great temporal saviours to the Israelites. The one brought them into Canaan; the other led them out of Babylon, Ezr 2:2. But this was yet a more excellent Joshua, who was to save his people from their sins. The angel further goes on describing him, saying,

He shall be great. Isaiah had said, Isa 9:6, his name shall be called Wonderful, mighty both in words and deeds, Lu 24:19.

And shall be called the Son of the Highest, that is, the Son of God, who is often in Scripture made known by this name, Ge 14:19; Ps 83:18 92:1 Mr 5:7. *He shall be called the Son,* that is, he shall be so, for this phrase so signifieth often, Isa 1:26 Joh 1:12; for he shall be known and *declared to be so*, Ro 1:4. Peter so called him; so did the centurion who attended his cross. God himself called him so, Ps 2:7, and that in a sense agreeing to none but him; no, not to the angels, Heb 1:5, much less to saints.

And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: not the temporal kingdom, but the spiritual kingdom over the same people over whom David ruled, from whom he is descended. It appeareth from many passages in the prophets that David's kingdom was a type of Christ's, 2Sa 7:13 Ps 2:6 132:11 Isa 9:6,7 Am 9:11. Hence we find the name of David given to Christ, Jer 30:9 Eze 34:23 Eze 37:24 Ho 3:5. *And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* Jacob was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel; so as the house of Jacob primarily signifieth the Jews, who were the natural

branches in this excellent olive. Christ's kingdom extended beyond the house of Jacob, but it began there, his law went first out of Zion, and he was in the first place sent to the lost sheep of Israel; he was the *minister of the circumcision*, Ro 15:8. Others were to be joined to the house of Jacob, Isa 14:1. Or *Jacob*, and *the house of Jacob*, may signify the whole church, all that should believe in Christ. The rod of his strength went out of Zion, Ps 110:2, though his kingdom was not confined to Jacob. All believers who *worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus*, are by the apostle determined *the circumcision*, Php 3:3, and *he is a Jew who is one inwardly*, Re 2:29.

And of his kingdom there shall be no end: this both expounds the words *for ever*, going just before, and also distinguishes the kingdom of Christ from all kingdoms of the world, which all shall have their periods; and also assures us of the continuance of the gospel church, which is Christ's kingdom, till his kingdom of glory be revealed; and this agreeth with the prophecies of the Old Testament, concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, and the typical kingdom of David, Ps 145:13 Isa 9:7 Da 7:14 Mic 4:7.

Luke 1:34

Ver. 34. There are some would excuse Mary in this reply, and tell us these words spake in her no doubt that the things spoken by the angel should not come to pass, only admiration, or a desire to be further acquainted which way God would effect such a wonder of providence. Others think her words hardly excusable from all guilt, though the more excusable because there had yet been no such precedent made in the world of the Divine power, as to cause a virgin to conceive, and bring forth a son. The next words, *seeing I know not a man*, seem to import that she understood the angel of the present or past time, that she had already conceived, or should immediately conceive, against which she objects her not having any carnal knowledge of any man. For the notion of some papists, that would from hence impose upon us to believe that Mary hath vowed virginity, as if the sense of the words were, I am resolved never to know man, it is so ridiculous, that no man of ordinary sense can allow it; for, besides that there were no such vows that we ever read of amongst the Israelites, nor

could any such be made but by the law of God might be rescinded, if made when the virgin was in her father's house; and besides that it is very improbable that a Jewish woman should make such a vow, in whom barrenness was such a reproach, and who looked upon it as a curse; I say, besides these things, who can have such unworthy thoughts of the blessed virgin, as to think that she should, having made such a vow, admit of an espousal to Joseph to mock him? But she certainly understood the angel as speaking of a thing in being, or which presently should be; and though she believed what the angel said, yet is desirous of further satisfaction how such a thing could be out of the ordinary course of nature.

Luke 1:35

Ver. 35. *The Holy Ghost* (who is also called here *the power of the Highest*) shall come upon thee; it is a phrase which signifieth a special and peculiar influence of the Holy Spirit: thus we read of the prophets, that the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, 2Ch 20:14, &c., which argued a special influence of the Holy Spirit on them, efficacious, so as it put them upon a present prophesying. There is a common influence of God upon the forming of all children in the womb, Job 10:8 Ps 139:15. But this phrase denotes an extraordinary special influence of the Spirit, changing the order and course of nature, and giving a power to the blood of the virgin by him sanctified, to coagulate alone to the forming of the body of a child: this is more mysteriously yet expressed, by the term *overshadow thee*, which I take to be a modest phrase, signifying only a supply of man's act, by a Divine creating power, in a most miraculous manner.

Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God, as Adam was called the son of God, Lu 3:38, God (by his creating power) supplying as to him the place of father and mother, and to Christ supplying the place of the father, though not of the mother, for (saith the angel) he shall be *born of thee*. But yet that mass of flesh shall be a holy thing, because, though born of thee, and flesh of thy flesh, yet of thy flesh first sanctified, by the Holy Ghost coming upon and overshadowing of thee. He *shalt be called* so, not that he was not so by eternal generation, (of which the angel here speaks not), but the Word, the eternal Son of God, which was in the beginning, being thus made flesh, and personally united to thy flesh, the whole person shall be called *the Son of God*.

Luke 1:36

Ver. 36,37. What a particular notice doth God take of the children of men! he knoweth our relations: *thy cousin Elisabeth*. Here some make a question how Elisabeth, who was one of the daughters of Aaron, Lu 1:5, and consequently of the tribe of Levi, could be cousin to Mary, who was of the house of David, and consequently of the tribe of Judah, (as our evangelist proveth, Lu 1:3), because of the law, Nu 36:6,7. But *cousin* may be taken in a large sense, as Paul calleth all the Jews his kinsmen, Ro 9:3; or they might be cousins in a strict sense, for the daughters of the tribe of Levi might marry into any other tribes, having no inheritance to carry away, to prevent which was the law, Nu 36:1-13.

And this is the sixth month from her conception, by which time women use to be at some certainly about their quickening; you must not therefore think this impossible, for you know Elisabeth was counted barren, and was old, yet she hath conceived.

For with God nothing shall be impossible. I bring you a message from God, to whom all things are possible. This was an ordinary saying amongst them, Nothing is impossible with God. Our Saviour useth it several times, Mt 19:26 Mr 10:27. Nor needed we any Scripture to prove that nothing could be impossible to him who is the first Being, the first Cause, and the Fountain of all power, and to whom all things are subject. No considerate man will from hence conclude that things are possible to God which would derogate from the perfection of the Divine Being, and are imperfections in us; nor yet that any thing is possible to God the contrary to which he hath willed, but God can do whatsoever he can will.

Luke 1:38

Ver. 38. *Once have I spoken,* (saith Job, Job 40:5) *but I will not answer.* In like manner the virgin speaketh: I will dispute no more; I am the Lord's servant, let him do with me whatsoever he pleaseth. This phrase, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord,* doth not speak her the lady and queen of

heaven, (as the papists style her), but it speaketh her humility and readiness to give up herself to the Lord's pleasure, her assent and consent unto God. She addeth a prayer, that God would do according to what the angel had said unto her. The angel, having despatched his errand, and obtained what he came for, ascendeth into heaven.

Luke 1:39

Ver. 39,40. Many think that this city where this Zacharias lived was Hebron, before called Kirjatharba, Jos 14:15, for that was a city in the mountainous part of Judah, one of the cities of refuge, and belonging to the priests, Jos 20:7; but whether it was so or not cannot be certainly determined. She probably went not only to rejoice with Elisabeth her kinswoman, but also to strengthen her own faith as to the revelation which she had received, finding that true which the angel had told her concerning her cousin Elisabeth.

Luke 1:41

Ver. 41. The motion of the child in the womb of the mother after her time of quickening is past, and the more than ordinary motion of it upon some extraordinary cause of joy, is no unusual thing with women in those circumstances; but doubtless as this motion was more than ordinary, so it had a more than ordinary cause, being caused from the Holy Spirit of God, and so the best interpreters judge: what is afterward said of Elisabeth, that she *was filled with the Holy Ghost, is expounded in the next words, wherein she prophesieth, of the Spirit of prophecy.*

Luke 1:42

Ver. 42. Elisabeth useth the same words to Mary which the angel had used for her, Lu 1:28; that is, thou art an exceedingly happy woman, not only renowned, but one whom God hath greatly favoured and exceedingly blessed and made happy.

And blessed is the fruit of thy womb. Though the same word be used, yet it is not to be understood of the same degree of blessing. Christ was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, and blessed in another sense and after another manner, than any creature can be said to be blessed, for the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily.

Luke 1:43

Ver. 43. Elisabeth in these words acknowledgeth both the incarnation of Christ, and the union of the Divine and human nature in the one person of the Mediator; she acknowledgeth Christ her Lord, and Mary to be his mother.

Luke 1:44

Ver. 44. By these words Elisabeth declareth that she looked upon the motion of the child in her womb, upon Mary's salutation of her, as something more than natural.

Luke 1:45

Ver. 45. Some will have this given as a reason why Elisabeth pronounced her blessed, because she believed that what God had said should have its effect; as, Lu 11:27,28, when the woman blessed the womb that bare Christ, and the paps that gave him suck, Christ saith, *Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.* Mary was blessed not in this so much, that she brought forth Christ, as in this, that she believed in him. The words are certainly a great confirmation of what the angel had before told her, and it must needs be a great satisfaction to her to hear to her kinswoman, by the Spirit of prophecy, coming extraordinarily upon her, confirming what the angel had before told her.

Luke 1:46

Ver. 46,47. We are now come to the famous song of the blessed virgin, upon whom also the Spirit of the Lord comes upon this occasion. She first solemnly gives praise unto God, then by various expressions declareth the power and goodness of God, showing him worthy to be praised, and lastly applies what she had spoken more generally to the particular business of man's redemption. Our magnifying God is not by making him great, as he magnifies us, as it is Lu 1:49, but by declaring and showing forth his greatness. She saith, her soul did magnify the Lord, and her spirit rejoiced. Soul and spirit are but two words signifying the same thing, and importing that she glorified God heartily, and with her whole soul, and teaching us that all praising of God with our lips is of no significance, without the conjunction of the heart with the tongue.

In God my Saviour. So Hannah, 1Sa 2:1, *My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, mine horn is exalted in the Lord.* This is true spiritual rejoicing, when the primary object of our joy is not the sensible good, but the goodness of the Lord to us, in giving us that good thing.

Luke 1:48

Ver. 48. Our translators have here rightly translated ταπεινωσιν, *low estate*. Mary doubtless doth not here commend her own humility, (as some papists would have it), but magnifies God for that he had respect to her who was of so mean and low a condition; for though she was of the family of David, yet that family had for many years been broken and afflicted, and she was now espoused to a carpenter, which spake her condition low and mean though descended from the royal family of David: and thus God usually magnifies himself; he chooseth David from the sheepfold to be king over Israel; he much delighteth to exalt such as are low; he chooseth *the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and base things of the world, and things*

which are despised, hath God chosen; that no flesh should glory in his presence, 1Co 1:27-29.

Henceforth (saith Mary) all generations shall call me blessed. It is no mean favour of God, when God giveth us a name: in the world, and that not only in the present generation, but in succeeding generations.

Luke 1:49

Ver. 49. That which is observable both in this verse, and in this whole song, is how the blessed virgin attributes all to God, and ascribes nothing to herself, or any merits of her own, much like unto her father David. Ps 115:1, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake;* and herein she teacheth those generations, which she had even now said should call her blessed, how to take notice of her, viz. as one highly favoured of the Lord, one for whom God indeed had done great things, but not as one who had merited any thing at God's hand, much less as one to whom we should pay a greater devotion than to her Son, and speak to her that she should command her Son, according to the blasphemous devotion and idolatry of the papists. Mary is very careful of giving succeeding generations any occasion from her expressions for any such superstitions.

And holy is his name: holy, that is, glorious and venerable. His name, that is, he himself is glorious and holy, far above the conception and comprehension of poor creatures.

Luke 1:50

Ver. 50. Having celebrated God for his glory and majesty, she here celebrates him for his mercy, which extends to all, but especially is showed to such as fear him. She certainly respecteth the promise of God to be the God of Abraham and this seed, but declareth this to be most eminently made good to those who are truly pious, all piety being expressed ordinarily in Scripture (especially in the Old Testament) under the notion of the fear of God. We have almost the same words Ps 103:17. It is elsewhere expressed under the notion of thousands, Ex 20:6,

signifying not only the extent of the Divine goodness to all his people, but the continuance of it for ever.

Luke 1:51

Ver. 51,52. In these verses the virgin celebrates both the power and justice of God, as she before had done his holiness, and his mercy and goodness. The strength of a man is much seen in the effects of his arm; hence God, who hath no such parts as we have, is yet spoken of as if he had an arm, by which no more is signified than a mighty power, by which he bringeth things to pass; Ex 15:16 Ps 89:13 98:1 Isa 40:10: so in many other texts.

He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. Jethro, Ex 18:11, knew that *the Lord was above all gods*, because *in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them*.

The proud in Scripture often signifies wicked men, as *the humble* signifies good and holy men; but *proud*, in a strict sense, signifieth men that have a high opinion of themselves: now there is nothing that a proud man dealeth more proudly in, than in following the imaginations of his own heart. There (saith Mary) God scattereth them, turning their counsels into folly, and confounding them in their own imaginations.

He hath put down the mighty from their seats: thus he did by Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, &c.: he pulls down some, and sets up others. Promotion is not from the east, nor from the west.

And exalted them of low degree: this is God's way; thus he exalted Moses, Joseph, Jacob, David. God thus showeth his mighty power and superintendency upon men's affairs. He doth what he pleaseth with men, yet what he doth is infinitely wise, just, and good.

Luke 1:53

Ver. 53. In this sentence the holy virgin celebrates the equity of God in the government of the world, proportioning men in some degrees one to

another, that the rapacious qualities of some might not gain all to them, while, others have nothing. The notion of *hungry*, speaketh persons in want, and craving a supply. The notion of *rich*, signifieth persons that are full. God blesseth the poor, pitieth the needy, while he neglects greater persons. Some apply it to those whom Christ blesseth, Mt 5:3-11, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and expound the rich of those who think they have no need of the righteousness of Christ. In this sense it is also true, but whether the virgin intended it here or not I know not.

Luke 1:54

Ver. 54,55. In these verses the blessed virgin celebrates God's mercy together with his truth, withal she hath here a respect to God's particular goodness and mercy in the sending of the Redeemer. The word which we here translate *hath holpen*, signifieth he hath sustained, or as it were lifted up with his hand, *his servant Israel*, or his child Israel. He calleth *Ephraim* his *dear son*, his *pleasant child*, Jer 31:20; but by *Israel* he meaneth believers, those of Abraham's seed that lived in the faith, hope, and expectation of the Messiah; *the children of the promise*, Ro 9:8; those who are Jews *inwardly*, Ro 2:29; *the true circumcision*, Php 3:3; *Israelites indeed*, Joh 1:47. This, she saith, God had done, not *in remembrance of* their merits, but *his own mercy*, Eze 36:32; of his own free goodness and mercy, and in the fulfilling of his promise made to Abraham, Ge 17:15; the extent of which promise is declared Ro 9:6-9; and that *seed of Abraham*, his seed as the father of the faithful, shall be for ever, and the virtue of the promise shall hold to them for ever.

Luke 1:56

Ver. 56. It is most probable that she staid with her until she was brought to bed, not leaving her just at the time of her travail, but she staid not long after, but went home: by this time she must herself know that she was with child; and here in the true order of the history cometh in what we had Mt 1:18-25: See Poole on "Mt 1:18" and following verses to Mt 1:25.

Luke 1:57

Ver. 57,58. The angel told Mary, Lu 1:36, that it was then *the sixth month with her*; after this Mary was with her about three months, which made up her full time; so she was delivered, and brought forth a son, to show the truth of God's promises, that we may all learn to give credit to his word. For the neighbours and kinswomen of Elisabeth to come, and to rejoice with her, was but according to the ordinary custom of friends to this day, like enough to hold to the end of the world. But the religion of persons in that age possibly is not in so ordinary a practice, I mean in the taking notice of the influence and goodness of God to those who receive such mercies. We are fallen into an age where congratulations made to friends upon any good things happening to them are ordinary, and meetings also to make merry (as they call it) upon such occasions; but ah, how little is that God, who openeth the womb, and a reward from whom children are, taken notice of! How little is his power and goodness in such providences taken notice of in such meetings, and made the subject of the discourses there had! Elisabeth's *neighbours and cousins* take notice *how the Lord had showed great mercy unto her*. The mercy of a child, of a safe delivery in the birth of a child, are great mercies, and ought to be the first and principal things taken notice of in such rejoicing meetings; otherwise the meeting is more like a meeting of pagans than of Christians.

Luke 1:59

Ver. 59-61. The law for circumcision, Ge 17:12 Le 12:3, was strictly for it to be performed the eighth day. We find nothing commanded in Scripture, either as to the person who was to perform the office of the circumciser, or as to the place. God met Moses in the inn, and sought to kill him, because he had not circumcised his child, and Zipporah his wife did it, Ex 4:24,25. It is said they afterwards did it in the synagogues, but there is no Divine law in the case. That the name was given to the child upon its circumcision appeareth not from Scripture. It is said, Ge 21:3, that *Abraham called his son Isaac*, and then, Lu 1:4, *he circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old*. We read of no name given by Zipporah to her child when she circumcised him. But the name was at circumcision declared. It is most certain that John was circumcised in his father's house, for we find his

mother was present, who at that time was not in a condition to stir abroad. They called his name *Zacharias*, whence we may observe the ancient usage of giving to children the names of their fathers and kindred. This in all probability is the reason of so many odd and unjustifiable names given to persons, such as are names of heathenish gods and goddesses, not fit to be named amongst Christians, &c. We derive from pagans, and though some heathens changed their names when they turned Christians, yet many (probably) did not, and by a long tradition (the names of parents being given to children) the names of pagan idols, such as Fortune, Diana, and the like, are by a most sordid practice made the names of Christians, a thing which certainly ought to be reformed, for it is a doing honour to those idols, if the giving a person's name to a child be (as we ordinarily account it) an honour done to the person whose name is so given. The Jews from their beginning seem to have had a religion as to this, giving names to their children either significative of God's mercy to them, or their children, or their own duty to God; and the names of the parents, or some of the kindred, were in honour to them given to their children; therefore when Elisabeth (who knew the counsel of God as to this child, either by some writing from Zacharias, or some revelation to herself) heard them call him Zacharias, and contradicted them in this thing, and named him John, they object that none of her kindred was called by that name.

Luke 1:62

Ver. 62,63. It was the parents' place, the father's especially, to give children their names. Zacharias was dumb as yet, they therefore made signs to him; he by writing declareth that his name was *John*, that is, he was so named already by the angel, therefore there was to be no further dispute about it. The friends marvel at the consent of both the parents in the case, declining all the names of their kindred.

Luke 1:64

Ver. 64. The angel, Lu 1:20, inflicted the punishment upon him no longer

than until what he had said should be performed; now it was performed, God looseth his tongue, and he praiseth God, by the song which we shall by and by meet with.

Luke 1:65

Ver. 65,66. By *fear* here is to be understood an awe and religious reverence of God, caused by these miraculous operations. *Fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles,* Ac 2:43.

These sayings, ρηματα ταυτα; it is a Hebraism; these doings, or matters, or things, were published throughout all the parts of Judea adjacent to the city where Zacharias dwelt, Lu 1:39.

And those serious people that heard them pondered on them, considering the work of the Lord, and did think that this child would prove no ordinary person. And the hand of the Lord was with him. By the hand of the Lord is meant, the power of the Lord, his providence, love, favour: thus the Lord is said to have been with Samuel, 1Sa 3:19. The hand of the Lord oft signifieth the power, help, and assistance of the Lord, 1Ch 28:19 Ps 80:17. The hand of the Lord upon a person sometimes signifieth the Spirit of prophecy, Eze 1:3 40:1; but this is a different phrase, denoting only God's special favour to John, watching over and protecting him, causing him to grow up and thrive, to improve in knowledge, &c.

Luke 1:67

Ver. 67. We must not think that Zacharias was before this time destitute of the Holy Ghost, we heard the contrary before, Lu 1:6, but the Holy Ghost at this time came upon him by a particular and more especial impulse; as it did upon the prophets, whom the Spirit moved but at some special times to prophesy, though it at all times dwelt and wrought in them, as a holy, sanctifying Spirit. This is made good by the next words, which tell us he *prophesied;* which word signifieth any speaking for or instead of another, and is not only applicable to such speakings as are foretellings of things

which shall afterward come to pass, but unto any speaking for or instead of God, in the revelation of his will made known unto us. In this prophecy there is both predictions of what should come to pass concerning John and concerning Christ, and also applications of what was before spoken of them by the prophets; and it is observed by some, that it is an epitome of all those ancient prophecies, and that there is in it a compendium of the whole doctrine of the gospel.

Luke 1:68

Ver. 68-70. God is not the God of Israel only, but of all the nations of the earth also; but he is peculiarly called *the God of Israel*, both here and in many other places, Ps 41:13 72:18 Ps 106:48, &c., in regard of the covenant which he had specially made with them, and the special advantages they had, mentioned by the apostle; *to them were committed the oracles of God*, Ro 3:2; and to them pertained *the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises*, Ro 9:4. Zacharias pronounces God *blessed*, and desires that he may be blessed, that is, honoured, and celebrated, and spoken well of, for that he had *visited and redeemed his people*. The word may be extended to all God's deliverances of Israel, but it seemeth to be here more specially restrained by what followeth to the redemption by Christ.

And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us. An horn of salvation signifies a mighty, powerful salvation, by a metaphor taken from beasts, which much exert their power by their horns. The beast's ten horns, Da 7:7, are expounded to be ten kings, Lu 1:24; so Ps 75:10, where David saith he *will cut off all the horns of the wicked*; so La 2:3, where God is said to have *cut off all the horn of Israel. In the house of his servant David*. This agreeth to the prophecy, Jer 30:9, where Christ is called *David*; *They shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King, whom I will rise up unto them*; who is also called *a righteous Branch raised unto David*, Jer 23:5. God is said to have raised up this horn of salvation in the house of David. The house of David was now down, lapsed and decayed. God promises to raise up to the Israelites a mighty salvation from the house of David. This was fulfilled in Christ.

As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the

world began. All the prophets, or many of them at least, prophesied of Christ as the Son of David, and of a great salvation to be raised up to Israel from his house.

Luke 1:71

Ver. 71,72. This was that which God had told them by his prophets, that a mighty salvation should arise to them out of the house of David, by which they should be saved from their enemies. By which enemies the generality of the Jews understood their temporal enemies, made of flesh and blood. But Zacharias, speaking by the Spirit of prophecy, must needs have a truer notion of it, as it signifies our spiritual enemies. All this is attributed to God's mercy and faithfulness, his mercy freely looking upon his creatures in distress and misery, his faithfulness in remembrance of his holy covenant, made to Adam, Abraham, David, &c.; but it is more particularly explained.

Luke 1:73

Ver. 73. God first gave Abraham his word, Ge 18:10, then he confirmed it by his oath, Ge 22:16. The apostle, to the Hebrews, saith, Heb 6:13, *When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself.*

Luke 1:74

Ver. 74,75. Thus Zacharias, by an infallible Spirit, expounds the covenants and oaths of God to Abraham and David, not as they appear to us at first view, as if they were promises of a mere temporal kingdom, and a victory for the Jews over their enemies, together with a splendid state for them, which was all the scribes and Pharisees, and the generality of the Jews, expected from the Messiah; but as confirming God's resolution to send the Jews a Saviour, who should save them from their sins, the guilt and

dominion of them, and from the power of hell, and purchase a spiritual liberty for them to serve the Lord all their days, *without fear, in holiness and righteousness*, which indeed was the true end of the Messiah's coming. Thus for now the song of this holy man respected Christ, whom he showeth to be sent from the free grace and mercy of God, yet in performance of God's truth and faithfulness, according to his oath promises; and to be therefore sent to deliver his people from their enemies, and to purchase for them a spiritual liberty, not to sin, but to serve the Lord without fear; in holiness and righteousness. The latter part of his prophecy respecteth John the Baptist, the new born son of this priest and heavenly prophet.

Luke 1:76

Ver. 76. Zacharias here foretells what came to pass about thirty years after, for it cannot be thought that John began his ministry before the sacerdotal age, especially considering Christ did not begin sooner, Lu 3:23.

Thou shalt be called the prophet; that may either signify, thou shalt be a prophet, as Mt 5:9 Joh 1:12; or thou shalt be owned or taken notice of as the prophet *of the Highest*. Both were true in John. He was a prophet, (though not *that Prophet*, Joh 1:21), *yea, and more than a prophet*, saith our Saviour, Mt 11:9.

For thou shalt go before his face to prepare his ways. This was according to the prophecy, Isa 40:3 Mal 4:5: and according to what John said of himself, Mt 3:3 Mr 1:3. See Poole on "Mt 3:3".

Luke 1:77

Ver. 77. To preach the doctrine of repentance to men, that they may obtain remission of sins. But it seems more natural, To teach people that the only way by which they can attain salvation, is not by any righteousness of their own, but by obtaining the free pardon and remission of their sins by Christ and his righteousness, Ps 32:1, which is in short to preach the gospel, which *is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth*. For

therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, Ro 1:16,17.

Luke 1:78

Ver. 78. In the Greek it is, through the bowels of mercy. An ordinary expression, and very natural, to signify great and deep compassion, Ge 43:30 1Ki 3:26. Our remission of sin floweth from God's bowels of mercy; it depends not upon our satisfactions and penances, (as papists dream), but God's free and tender love; yet God must be just, and declare his righteousness while he justifieth the ungodly.

Whereby the Dayspring from on high hath visited us, ανατολη εξ υψους. Some think that the Greek word answereth the Hebrew word, translated the *Branch*, Jer 23:5 Zec 3:8; the seventy interpreters translate it by ανατολην, Jer 33:15. Those texts manifestly relate to Christ, who is called there *the Branch*. Others think it rather answereth the Hebrew word נֹר we translate it a great *light*. Others think it should be translated *the East*. So they say Christ is called Zec 3:8; Zec 6:12; but we translate it *the Branch* in both those places. Be it *the Branch*, or *the Light*, or *Dayspring*, or *the East*, it is certain Christ is meant, who is called *the Sun of righteousness*, Mal 4:2. That God might be just in the remission of our sins, he sent Christ to visit us, and in our nature to die for us.

Luke 1:79

Ver. 79. Here Zacharias showeth us the end why God visited us with his Son, *the Branch, the Light, the Dayspring, the Sun of righteousness.* Men were in the darkness of sin and ignorance, dead in trespasses and sins, at war and enmity with God; Christ came to give them the light of gospel revelations, the light of spiritual comfort and salvation, to purchase peace, and to direct them how to walk that they might have peace with God, and at last enter into peace. This he did to the Jews first, then to the Gentiles: see Isa 9:1,2 60:1,19.

Luke 1:80

Ver. 80. The evangelist having done with Zacharias's prophetic song, now cometh to tell us what became of John. He saith, *the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit.* He did not only grow in his bodily dimensions, but in the endowments of his mind.

And was in the deserts, that is, in places very thinly inhabited, (some will have this to have been the deserts of Ziph and Maon), *till the day of his showing unto Israel;* that is, in all probability, till he was about thirty years of age, when he came forth as a public preacher to those parts of Israel where he spent the small remaining part of his life, of which we shall hear more hereafter.

Luke 2:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 2:1-5 Augustus taxes all the Roman empire: Joseph goeth with Mary to be taxed at Bethlehem.

Lu 2:6,7 The birth of Christ.

Lu 2:8-14 An angel bringeth news thereof to the shepherds: the heavenly host praise God.

Lu 2:15-20 The shepherds, finding it to be as the angel had said, glorify God.

Lu 2:21 The circumcision of Christ.

Lu 2:22-24 The purifying of Mary.

Lu 2:25-35 Simeon's prophecy,

Lu 2:36-38 and Anna's, concerning Christ.

Lu 2:39,40 Jesus groweth, and increases in wisdom.

Lu 2:41-50 At twelve years of age he goeth with his parents to Jerusalem, and questions with the doctors in the temple,

Lu 2:51,52 he is obedient to his parents.

Ver. 1-3. Octavius Caesar (called Augustus, for his prosperous achievements) was the first Roman emperor properly so called, (for Julius Caesar had but the title of perpetual dictator), in the forty-second year of whose reign Christ was born, (Josephus saith, in the one and thirtieth year,

Antiq. cap. 10.), Herod the Great being at that time king of Judea, being so declared by the senate of Rome near forty years before. It was the custom of the Romans to take a particular account of the numbers and qualities of all persons inhabiting countries under their jurisdiction, in order to the laying of taxes upon them. About the time of the birth of Christ there was a decree issued from the Roman emperor for such a census or account to be taken of the Jews, who, some think, are here only understood by the term, *all the world*; others think that it was a decree which reached all that part of the world which was subject to the Roman emperor. This trust it seemeth was committed to Cyrenius, governor of Syria; whether he was at that time governor, or afterwards made governor, and at this time only a commissioner for this business, is not agreed. That this Cyrenius was the same whom the Roman historians call Quirinius is pretty well agreed. Great endeavours are used to reconcile what Luke saith here to Josephus and the Roman historians, who make Varus, not Quirinius, at this time the president of Syria. Those who desire to be satisfied as to those things may read Mr. Pool's Synopsis Criticorum upon this text, &c. Where civil historians differ from what we have in holy writ, we are obliged to believe them mistaken, not the penmen of holy writ, who were guided by an infallible Spirit. Leaving therefore those disputes, and in what sense this census is called the *first*, or is said to be first begun, when Cyrenius or Quirius was president, as being of no great concern, (for other historians grant Quirinius at this time a commissioner with Caius Caesar, and within ten years after president, in succession to Varus), let us rather herein observe the wonderful providence of God in the ordering of things for the fulfilling of his word, while we think of no such things, to which purpose doubtless this is premised by the evangelist. According to the counsel of God, declared by his prophets, Mic 5:2, Christ was to be born at Bethlehem, the metropolis of Judea; so the chief priests and scribes tell Herod, Mt 2:5. Mary his mother, and Joseph his supposed father, lived at a great distance from Bethlehem, in Nazareth, a city of Galilee. God so ordereth it, that the Roman emperor (under whose power the Jews were at this time) orders a numbering of all his subjects, either in all his dominions at the same time, or at least in Judea, and an account to be taken of their persons and qualities, in order to the laying taxes upon them, to defray the charges of the empire. The account of the Jews being to be taken according to their tribes, those who belonged to each tribe were ordered to convene in the chief city belonging to the tribe of which they were. Joseph and Mary were both of the tribe of Judah. This occasion brings them both to

Bethlehem, being the chief city of their tribe, to meet the emperor's commissioners. So Christ came to be born in Bethlehem, according to the word of the Lord, from which a tittle shall not fail; and little Bethlehem becomes not the least amongst the thousands of Judah, one coming out of it to be a *Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth were of old, even from everlasting.*

Luke 2:4

Ver. 4-6. This was the occasion of Joseph's coming to Bethlehem, who either for fear of Herod, or for the convenience of his trade, (though he belonged to the tribe of Judah), was removed into Galilee; but he yieldeth obedience to the civil magistrates, and cometh to be enrolled in the court books belonging to the Roman empire, to which by this action he acknowledgeth himself a subject; he also by this act publicly declared both himself and Mary his wife to have been of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David. We are told it was the custom of the Romans to enrol both women and children; however, Mary's personal attendance upon this homage might have been excused by her being great with child, had not the counsel of God so ordered it, that Christ should be born there; this doubtless carried Mary along with Joseph, he having now (according to the angel's direction, Mt 1:20,24), took her unto him as his wife. While they were there, Mary's time of childbearing was *accomplished*: we have the like phrase Ge 25:24.

Luke 2:7

Ver. 7. It is Bucer's note, that in the Greek it is not *her firstborn Son*, but τον υιον αυτης τον πρωτοτοκον, her Son, the firstborn; he was truly her Son, and her Son firstborn, but he was not called πρωτοτοχος upon that account merely, for he was *the firstborn of every creature*, Col 1:15: he was the firstborn also of Mary, but it cannot be from thence concluded she had more sons, for where there is but one son he is the firstborn.

And wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, &c. Whether the inn was in the city, or in the suburbs adjoining near to the city, is not material for us to know; nor, considering the occasion of meeting at Bethlehem at that day, and the numbers who upon that occasion must be there, is it at all strange, that a person of no higher visible quality than a carpenter should not find a room in the inn, but be thrust into a stable; nor was it unusual in those countries for men and women to have lodgings in the same rooms where beasts were kept, it is no more than is at this day in some places even in Europe. Here the virgin falls into her labour, brings forth her Son, and lodgeth him in a manger; God (by this) teaching all Christians to despise the high and gay things of this world. He who, though he was *in the form of God*, and *thought it not robbery to be equal with the Father*, thus making himself of no reputation; and being found in fashion as a man, thus humbling himself, as the apostle speaks, Php 2:6-8.

Luke 2:8

Ver. 8. Bethlehem was a place about which were pastures for sheep, as appears from 1Sa 17:15. There were shepherds abroad in the night (for so the word signifieth) watching over their flocks; whether the phrase signifieth (as some think) successive watches, such as are kept by soldiers, and by the priests, I cannot say. This maketh some think, that it is hardly probable that our Saviour was born in December in the midst of the winter, that being no time when shepherds use in the night to be keeping their flocks in the field.

Luke 2:9

Ver. 9. Christ was promised to men who by their occupation were shepherds, Ge 47:3. He himself was the chief Shepherd, and the true Shepherd, Joh 10:11. The first publication of his birth is made to shepherds; not to shepherds that were idle, but busied in their honest vocations, keeping their flocks. This publication of his birth is made by an angel, whether the angel Gabriel before mentioned, or another, is not certain. This angel surprises the shepherds, cometh upon them thinking no

such thing, but only minding their business. The angel comes in a glorious appearance, probably an extraordinary light, for it is said, it *shone round about them*: such an appearance of extraordinary light is Lu 9:31,32. That *they were sore afraid* was but natural; we are naturally affected at sudden and unusual appearances with fear and amazement.

Luke 2:10

Ver. 10-12. Though God, in his appearances to his people, was wont so to appear, as to show them cause to revere his majesty, yet he always supported them, that their spirits might not fail under those apprehensions and consternations. The angel bids them not to fear, for they had no reason to be afraid, he came not to bring them any frightening tidings, but *tidings of joy*, and that not to them alone, *but to all people*, both Jews and Gentiles, for to that latitude the text may be expounded. What was that?

Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. You have heard of the promises of the Messias, of a Christ that should come, and of the house of David. The promises of that nature are this day fulfilled, he is *born this very day; unto you*, but not to you alone; he had before told them that his tidings of joy should extend to all nations.

And this shall be a sign unto you, by this you shall know the truth of what I say, and you shall know also where to find him; in *the city of David* (that is, Bethlehem, as was said before) *ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger*. Where you find such a babe, that is he, therefore be not offended at his low and mean condition, let that be no stumbling block to you, I give it you as a sign by which you shall know him.

Luke 2:13

Ver. 13,14. The nativity of our Saviour was published first by one angel, but it must be celebrated by a multitude of angels, who appear praising God upon this occasion. These are called the Lord's host, Ps 103:20,21,

not only because he useth them as his arms, to destroy his enemies, but also because of the order which is amongst them. How they praised God is expressed Lu 2:14, they sang *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men*. The words may be taken either judicatively, as signifying that was come to pass that day, by which God would have glory, men would have peace, and the good will of God to the sons of men was unspeakably declared: or precatorily, the angels desiring God might have glory, and that peace might be on earth, and the goodwill of God published to the sons of men. But the Vulgar Latin is most corrupt, that rendereth these words, *peace to men of good will*. When we consider that the heavenly host was here praising God, it will appear very reasonable to interpret these words judicatively; the angels hereby declaring their apprehensions, and the truth concerning this act of providence, no act more declaring the glory of God's power, wisdom, or goodness; nor more declaring his good will towards men, and more conducing to peace upon the earth, whether by it we understand the union of the Jews and Gentiles, or that peace of particular souls which floweth from a justification by faith in Christ; for though the text seemeth to speak of three things, *glory to God, peace on earth, and good will toward men*, yet indeed they are but two; the two latter differing only as the cause and the effect; the good will of God is the cause, peace with or amongst men is the effect, Ro 5:1 Eph 2:14,15,17.

Luke 2:15

Ver. 15-18. It was night, yet they delayed not to go and make a search, according to the revelation of the angel; and not in vain, they *found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe*. Divine revelations never deceive the soul that gives credit to them. Heaven and earth may pass away, but nothing which God hath spoken shall pass away without its accomplishment.

When they had seen it, they made known the saying, &c: they had no charge of secrecy upon them, so did well in publishing what was of such universal concern for men to know. Spiritual morsels ought not to be ate alone. The effect of their relation, in the generality of the people that heard it, was the same which we have often met with upon the people's seeing of Christ's miracles, viz. amazement and astonishment; we read nothing of

their faith. The first was a natural effect of a strange relation. The other must have been the special operation of God.

Luke 2:19

Ver. 19,20. The different effect of these things upon the generality of the people, upon Mary, and upon the shepherds, is worthy of our notice. The people only wondered, thinking the story of the shepherds a strange story. Mary suffereth them not to pass out of her thoughts, nor entertains them with a mere passion, which suddenly is extinguished; but she pondereth them in her heart, both those things she had learned from her husband, and what herself had heard from the angel, and this also, which was related to her of or by the shepherds. The shepherds return, that is, to the care of their flocks. Religion gives none a discharge from their secular duties: the disciples had a special call and command, that left their nets, and their parents, and followed Christ. The shepherds were only made occasional preachers, *pro hac vice*; they return, but *glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them*; which argued that they gave a firm and full assent to them, and that they were the first fruits of believers under the gospel dispensation. True faith produces great joy and thanksgiving to God, and needs must produce joy, because of the union it maketh betwixt a soul and its desired object.

Luke 2:21

Ver. 21. The time prescribed by the Divine law for circumcision was the eighth day. Ge 17:12 Le 12:3. He was indeed the lawgiver, and as such not tied to the observance of the law. But he was also *made of a woman, made under the law*, Ga 4:4; and the law was, Le 12:2, that *if a woman had conceived seed, and borne a man child, in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin should be circumcised*. He was to make himself appear the Son of Abraham; and so this was God's covenant, Ge 17:10, with Abraham and his seed after him; *Every man child among you shall be circumcised*. This

law Christ was bound to fulfil, and by the fulfilling of it in this point he showed himself *a debtor to do the whole law*, Ga 5:3, and by his observance of it he was to teach us our duty. He was to be *a minister of the circumcision*, Ro 15:8, and to the circumcision, which they would never have allowed him to be, had not he himself been circumcised; upon which account Paul took Timothy, *and circumcised him*, Ac 16:3. By his circumcision also we were to be *circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*, Col 2:11. It was therefore reasonable and necessary that Christ should be circumcised the eighth day.

His name was called Jesus; it was in circumcision before witnesses publicly declared to be so, for God by his angel had given him his name, Mt 1:21. We read of four under the Old Testament, to whom God gave names before they were born; Isaac, Ge 17:19, Josiah, 1Ki 13:2, Ishmael, Ge 16:11, Cyrus, Isa 44:28; and in the New Testament to John the Baptist, and to Jesus Christ. Which lets us know the certainty to God of future contingencies; for though the parents of Ishmael, and Isaac, John the Baptist, and Christ, imposed those names in obedience to the command of God, and there was but a small time betwixt the giving of these four their names and their birth, yet the case was otherwise as to Josiah and Cyrus.

Luke 2:22

Ver. 22-24. In these verses is a record of the virgin's obedience to two laws, the one concerning the purification of the woman after child birth; the other concerning the presenting of the male child before the Lord. We have the law concerning purification, Le 12:1-8 throughout. The sum was, That if a woman had brought forth a male child, she should be unclean seven days, and after that continue in the blood of her purifying thirty-three days. If she brought forth a female, she was to be unclean fourteen days, and afterward to continue in the blood of her purifying sixty-six days. So that the time of the woman's purification after the birth of a female was fourscore days, for a male (which was the present case) forty. After the expiration of which time, she was to bring a lamb of a year old for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtle dove for a sin offering, to the priest to the tabernacle, who was to offer it for her, and to make an atonement. If she were poor, and not able to bring a lamb, (which seems

the present case), then she was to bring only two turtle doves, or two young pigeons, the one for a burnt offering, the other for a sin offering. The evangelist takes no notice of any lamb, but only *a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons*; which lets us know she was poor, and so obliged by the law no further. Mary, after her forty days were expired, cometh up to the temple, to yield obedience to this law. And not so only, but also to present her child before the Lord. This depended upon two laws. We find the one Ex 13:2, where, in remembrance of God's sparing the Israelites, when he smote the first born of the Egyptians, he gave the Israelites this law: *Sanctify unto me all the first born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.* So Ex 22:29 34:19. Instead of these, God took the Levites, as appears by Nu 8:16; yet were the first born to be presented before the Lord, and redeemed by the payment of five shekels apiece, for all those who were above the number of the Levites, as appeareth by Nu 3:44-47; and five shekels was the redemption price of any male upon a singular vow, Le 27:6. For these two ends, after six weeks, Joseph, and Mary, and, Jesus come up to Jerusalem.

Luke 2:25

Ver. 25-28. Interpreters have spent much pains in fortifying their conjectures (for they can be no more) that this Simeon was Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillel, the father of Gamaliel, but to what purpose I cannot tell; it can hardly be thought that a man of that note should do such a thing as this so openly, and no more notice be taken of him. That which Calvin, and Brentius, and other Reformed divines do think is much more probable, that he was some ordinary, plain man, of an obscure quality as to his circumstances in the world. There was a general expectation of the Messiah at this time, but very few had a right notion of him, but lived in a vain expectation of I know not what secular prince, who should bring them a temporal deliverance. These few were scarce any of them of their rabbis or rabbans, but a poor despised sort of people, whom those great doctors counted accursed, Joh 7:48,49. The revelations of Christ were to none of the Pharisees, but to Joseph, a carpenter, to Mary, a despised virgin, though of the house of David, to an ordinary priest, Zacharias, to

shepherds; and why we should fancy this Simeon a principal doctor I cannot tell. The evangelist gives him his highest title, *A just man, and devout*, and one that waited *for the consolation of Israel*. One of the remnant, according to the election of grace, mentioned by the apostle; a holy and righteous man, one who waited *for the consolation of Israel*. Which is the same in sense with the character given of Joseph of Arimathea, Lu 23:51, that waited for the kingdom of God. Simeon waited for Christ, that is meant by *the consolation of Israel*. For it is very observable, that the prophets ordinarily comforted the people of God amongst the Jews, against all their sad tidings they brought them, with the prophecies of the coming and kingdom of Christ, Isa 66:13 Jer 31:13 Zec 1:17. Herein old Simeon showed the truth of his piety and devotion, that he believed and waited for the coming of Christ; he had a true notion of the Messiah promised, he believed that he should come, and he waited for his coming.

And it was revealed unto him, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ: God by the Holy Ghost gave him this special revelation, as the reward of his faith and the answer of his prayers, that he should live to see Christ born. The same Holy Spirit moved him to go into the temple, at that very time when Joseph and Mary brought in Christ, to present him to the Lord according to the law, and (though it be not expressed) certainly the same Spirit did intimate to him that that Child was *the Lord's Christ*. The old man takes him up in his arms, blesseth God, and saith, (see Lu 2:29-32).

Luke 2:29

Ver. 29-32. The song consists of an eulogium of Christ, whom Simeon here calls:

1. *The Lord's salvation;*
2. *A light to lighten the Gentiles;*
3. *The glory of Israel;*

and a petition, that now the Lord would let him *depart in peace*. But I shall take the words in order.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. He desireth to die, having now lived to see what alone he desired life for. It is a speech much like Jacob's, Ge 46:30, when he had seen Joseph, whom he thought lost, but spoken here upon a much more weighty consideration. The word translated *depart*, signifies to absolve, and forgive, Lu 6:37; to dismiss, and to deliver as from bondage and misery. It is used to express the death of good men, by the Septuagint, Ge 15:15 Nu 20:29; and the noun from it is used so by the apostle, 2Pe 1:15. Simeon owns God to be the Lord of his life, who had the power of it, and could alone dismiss him; and signifieth himself to be an old man, satisfied with days, willing to be at rest from the miseries of this life; but he begs to be dismissed, and to die in peace, that is, happily: see Ge 15:15 2Ki 22:20 Ps 4:8.

According to thy word, that is, thy promise, mentioned Lu 2:26. But the putting of these words in before those words *in peace*, seems to import that he could not die in peace before he had seen God's word fulfilled to him, in which he had made him to hope.

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, that is, thy Christ, according to the revelation I had from thee. Simeon had a special revelation of a corporeal sight of Christ; he could not die happily till he had had that. None of us can die in peace, till we have seen the Lord's salvation with a spiritual eye, and made application of the promises of the gospel, in the more general revelation of his word.

Thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; that is, the author of salvation, for there is no salvation in any other, Ac 4:12. Simeon declares that this salvation was prepared for all people. Isa 11:10, he was prophesied of as *an ensign for the people, to it shall the Gentiles seek*. So Isa 52:10, *The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God*. So Ps 98:2. Simeon speaks the same thing more particularly, Lu 2:32, *A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel*. All the people mentioned Lu 2:32 were either Gentiles or Jews. Simeon here prophesieth, that Christ should lighten the Gentiles. The state of the

Gentiles (by whom were understood all the people in the world except the Jews) is often in Scripture expressed under the notion of darkness, both in respect of the ignorance of the true God which was amongst them, and of their idolatry and superstition, and their lewd and wicked lives, much proportioned to their religion. Hence Paul is said to be sent to the Gentiles, *to turn them from darkness to light*, Ac 26:18. Christ is called *light*; Joh 8:12, *I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life*. So Joh 9:5. Conformable to the old prophecies: Isa 60:1-3, *Arise, shine, for thy light is come. Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light*. And speaking of Christ, Isa 49:6, *I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth*. So Isa 42:6, *And give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles*. See Ps 98:3 Ac 13:47.

And the glory of thy people Israel. All the earth is the Lord's, but Israel is called his *son*, his *first born*, Ex 4:22. Christ was the *minister of the circumcision*, Ro 15:8. To them it was that he was promised, of them it was that he was born, Ro 9:5. Amongst them it was that he preached and wrought miracles: *He came unto his own*, Joh 1:11. It was said of old, *I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory*, Isa 46:13. Christ is the glory of any people; the preaching of Christ, the owning and professing of Christ, a living up to his rules, this is a people's glory. And as some do this more and better than others, so in God's account they differ from others in what is true glory.

Luke 2:33

Ver. 33. Brentius notes on this text, *Non admirantur quia non credunt, sed quia credunt ideo admirantur*, They did not admire because they did not believe, but because they believed therefore they marvelled. They had revelations what Christ was; the angel had appeared to Joseph, to Mary, to Zacharias, and Elisabeth; the wise men had come from the east (if, as some think, they came so soon); yet they *marvelled*; they did not contemn and

mock at these things, but certainly neither did they fully understand them, but in the general believed the Divine revelation. I do doubt whether, before Christ was *declared to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead*, Ro 1:4, either Mary or Christ's own disciples did steadily and firmly believe, that Christ was the eternal Son of God; though it was clear that before that time they believed him to be sent of God, and a great Prophet, nay, the promised Messiah, the Christ of God, and generally believed that what was spoken of the Messiah and the Christ belonged to him, but whether they did rightly understand that the Messiah was to be God man I cannot tell. John Baptist seemeth clearest in the case. Peter also made a famous confession of it, but many things we read of Peter afterward which speak even Peter's faith in the case rather the embryo of faith than a fixed and perfect faith. But I impose nothing here on my reader, let him judge as he seeth reason; supposing a fixed firm faith in this case, yet they might marvel, for Christ is *to be admired of them that believe*.

Luke 2:34

Ver. 34,35. *Simeon blessed them*: some may question how it was that Simeon blessed Christ, whereas the apostle tells us, *The less is blessed of the better*, Heb 7:7. But we must distinguish between:

1. A prophetic blessing, as Jacob blessed his sons, which was nothing but a prediction how God would bless them.
2. An authoritative blessing, as the priests blessed the people in the name of the Lord, Nu 6:1-27; which is nothing but a pronouncing them blessed by authority from God, whom God hath blessed.
3. A charitable or precatory blessing; praying God to bless them.

Thus inferiors may bless superiors, as well as superiors may bless inferiors. The first or last, or both those, is to be understood here, not the second.

And said unto Mary his mother; not to Joseph, who he knew was not his natural, but legal and reputed, father.

*Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. That by the fall and rising again is here meant the salvation and damnation of many is doubted by no valuable interpreters. The apostle so applies Isa 8:14,15, where he is said to be for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. So doth Peter, 1Pe 2:8. Neither is it more than Christ telleth us, Joh 9:39, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. Accordingly the apostle saith, 2Co 2:16, that they were to some the savour of death unto death, to others the savour of life unto life. The reason is, because they that believe in him shall be saved, they that believe not shall be damned, Mr 16:16 Joh 3:18,36. This is now granted on all hands, that Christ will be the occasion of many people's damnation, even all that reject and oppose him, and believe not in him; and the cause of many people's salvation, even all that shall be saved: for there is no other name given under heaven, by which any can be saved, Ac 4:12: see Mt 21:44 1Pe 2:4,5. And it is observable, that the salvation of souls by Christ is expressed by the term *rising*; so as all are, fallen, Eph 2:1, and have need of the application of a greater power to them for their salvation, than an under propping of the innate power of their wills. But the great question is about *κειται*, *is set*, whether it signifieth only an event, or some counsel and ordination of God. Let us compare it with other texts where the same word is used, Php 1:17 1Th 3:3. How such great issues of providence should happen without the foreknowledge of God, or how God should have any such foreknowledge without a previous act of his will determining the thing, let any one consider; in the mean time it is freely granted, that the intervening of men's unbelief, and malice, and opposition to Christ and his gospel, is the proximate meritorious cause of the fall of any soul by occasion of him.*

It follows, and for a sign which shall be spoken against; such a mark as Job speaks of, Job 16:12; or such a sign as Isaiah speaks of, Isa 8:18. Simeon here prophesieth, that Christ, and his ministers and people, should be ridiculed, and all the arrows of ungodly men should be shot against him; which proved true in that age as to Christ and his apostles, and in succeeding ages as to all that derive from him, and will so hold to the end of the world.

Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also; as the irons entered into the soul of Joseph, Ps 105:18. He tells the virgin her soul should be wounded with the reproaches and indignities which should be offered to this blessed babe, as it proved afterwards, when she heard him reviled, and saw him crucified.

That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. The gospel times, especially times of persecution, will discover whom God hath chosen, and whom he hath not, by discovering the thoughts of their hearts; it will then be seen who will receive and who will reject the Messiah, who is on his side and who will be against him. The term *that* doth denote the consequent, not the effect. The preaching of the gospel is the Lord's fan, by which he purgeth his floor. Persecution is the Lord's sieve, by which he winnoweth churches, and separateth the dirt, and darnel, and tares from the wheat. Gospel times and times of persecution are both of them times which make great discovery of men's spirits.

Luke 2:36

Ver. 36-38. God took care that our Saviour's nativity should be fully attested. To the testimony of the angels, the wise men, the shepherds, Simeon, here is added another. It is that of Anna, who is described here by her tribe and by her father. She was *of the tribe of Aser*, one of the meanest tribes, and of those ten tribes that were carried into the captivity of Assyria, having before made a defection (under the conduct of Jeroboam) both from the house of David and from the true worship of God. But though the generality did so, yet many particular persons removed, to enjoy the true worship of God, and joined themselves to Judith. Jer 1:4, it was prophesied, *that the children of Israel should come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping, to seek the Lord their God.* What her father *Phanuel* was we read not. She is also further said to be *a prophetess*. Such there were amongst the Jews; we read of Deborah, and Miriam, and Huldah, to whom king Josiah sent. They were called prophets and prophetesses who revealed the will of God unto the people; but in the Old Testament it most generally signified, such as God enabled to foretell things which were to come. The spirit of prophecy

had much failed amongst the Jews for four hundred years before Christ; about Christ's coming it began to revive. This woman seems to have been upwards of a hundred years old, if we account the eighty-four years here mentioned from her widowhood; not so, if we count them from her birth. She was but seven years married, all the rest of her life she had spent in widowhood. She *departed not from the temple night or day*; that is, she was frequently there, giving up herself wholly to religious exercises, prayer, and fasting, that she might be more fit for prayer. This woman *coming in at that instant* where Simeon took up Christ in his arms, &c., *gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him* to such as she knew in Jerusalem, *who looked for the redemption* of Israel. There is no place where God hath had a name, but, however it be corrupted and debauched, hath a number that keep close to God. God in Ahab's time had seven thousand in Israel; and in this most corrupt time there was a Simeon and an Anna, and also others, who had a true notion and expectation of the Messiah; and these the Holy Ghost taketh more notice of than of all the Jewish doctors, all the scribes and Pharisees, whose names are enrolled, while what these persons said and did shall remain for a memorial of them wherever the gospel shall be preached to the end of the world.

Luke 2:39

Ver. 39. If the wise men, mentioned Mt 2:1, had been with Herod before this time, it is more than probable that Herod would have made an end of Christ at this time, therefore certainly it was after this time. Luke saith nothing of what we have Mt 2:13-15,19-23, of Joseph going into Egypt upon the admonition of the angel, nor his coming back; but both Matthew and Luke agree in their dwelling at Nazareth, which he calleth *their own city*, for there Joseph dwelt, Lu 2:4. How after this the wise men came to find him at Bethlehem, Mt 2:1-12, the Scripture hath not told us. It is very idle for any to say Joseph dwelt there, for then he would not have taken up his inn there, nor been put to such a stress as to have his wife bring forth in a stable; besides, it is apparent from Lu 2:4 and this verse, and from Mt 2:23, that he dwelt at Nazareth. God, who ordered the motion of the wise men, and their instructions to be sent to Bethlehem to look for Christ, could easily find Joseph some business to be done there at that time,

whether some business of his trade, or some visit to his friends, we cannot say.

Luke 2:40

Ver. 40. This verse shortly sums up all that we have in the Gospel of the history of the first twelve years of our Saviour's life. Though there could be no accession to the perfection of the Divine nature in Christ, yet as to his human nature he was (as we are) capable of accession of habits, and wisdom and knowledge; for though the Divine nature was personally united to the human nature, yet there was no communication of properties.

Luke 2:41

Ver. 41. The law of God enjoined all the males of the Israelites to appear at Jerusalem before him three times each year, of which the feast of unleavened bread was one; but the women seem not to have been all under the same obligation, but many of them went, of which Mary was one, but we read not of Christ's going till he was twelve years old. Some think that the women used to go once in a year, we read that Elkanah's wife went, 1Sa 1:5-7, but whether they generally did so or not the Scripture saith not. One thing is observable: the Pharisees, and scribes, and priests had in those days much corrupted the worship of God by their traditions, yet they retained the substance of God's institutions; we find both our Saviour and his disciples, and other people of God, not wholly forsaking the Jewish church because of its corruptions, yet we cannot think they joined with them in any thing of their will worship; from whence we may learn a tenderness as to a total separation from a church, and the lawfulness of attending divine ministrations, though attended with usages which we approve not of, provided there be no idolatry in the service.

Luke 2:42

Ver. 42. It is said by those who are learned in the Jewish writings, that till a child was of this age he was not obliged by the law to go. We have in Scripture nothing to ascertain us in the case; it is certain that our Saviour

went at this age, *after the custom of the feast*, that is, so as to be there about the fourteenth day of the month Nisan.

Luke 2:43

Ver. 43-45. The feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread, held seven days, during which time Joseph and Mary stayed in Jerusalem, and then returned. They usually both went to and returned from these feasts in great troops, or companies. Christ tarried behind; Mary, thinking he had been in the company, missed him not; they return to Jerusalem to seek him.

Luke 2:44

Ver. 44-46. *After three days* possibly here is to be understood from the time they first went from Jerusalem; one day they went forward in their journey, a second day they were coming back, the third day they found him; for it cannot be thought they should be in Jerusalem three days before they found him, considering that they found him in the temple, which it is likely was the first place they sought for him in. It should seem that the doctors of the law gave a general liberty to any to propound any questions to them about the law of God, to which they gave answers. But it is very probable that something more than ordinary appeared in him, that they admitted him to sit amongst them, for though themselves sat on benches, yet their auditors usually sat at their feet; hence we read of Paul's being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel.

Luke 2:47

Ver. 47. What was the subject matter of the doctors' and Christ's discourses is vainly questioned, only in the general we may be assured it was something about the Divine law; what the particular themes or subjects were is not material for us to inquire. Our Saviour so answered their questions, as they were all astonished.

Luke 2:48

Ver. 48. Though something must be allowed to a woman's passions and a mother's indulgence, yet one would think that, especially considering where they found him, and what doing, she should not have spoken thus unto him, had she had a clear and distinct knowledge of his Divine nature, in union with her flesh: she speaks to him with the authority of a mother, *Why hast thou thus dealt with us?*

Luke 2:49

Ver. 49,50. Some read it—*that I must be in my Father's house?* Then the sense must be, why did you seek me in any other place than the temple, that is, my Father's house, there lieth my business. But the phrase seemeth rather to signify as we translate it. He doth here signify that God was his Father: that Mary might have known, not only from the revelation of the angel, but because she had not known man; but she did not yet fully understand his Divine office as Mediator, and the great Prophet promised, that should reveal the will of God to people; much less did she yet fully and distinctly understand, that he was by nature the eternal Son of God: she believed so much as was revealed to her clearly concerning Christ.

It is said, *they understood not the saying which he spake unto them;* they had not a clear and distinct understanding of it. In the mean time, from these words of our Saviour, and this fact of his, we may learn, that inferiors are not in all things under the power of their most natural superiors; particularly not in such things wherein they cannot yield obedience to them without a disobedience unto God. There are some cases wherein, instead of obeying, we are bound to hate both father and mother by our Saviour's precept.

Luke 2:51

Ver. 51. We left him at Nazareth, after Mary's purification, Lu 2:39; we find him at Nazareth now at twelve years old. We shall now read no more

of him till Lu 3:23, when he came to *be about thirty years of age*. What he did in the mean time is a business of too much curiosity for us to inquire, and of very little significance to us if we knew. Some think he wrought with his father upon his trade. As I cannot tell how to prove it, so I know nothing against it. It is not likely he was sent to any of the schools of their prophets, as he who could argue with the doctors pertinently at twelve years of age, and to whom the Spirit was given not by measure, had no need of their instructions: so their academies were not such as we can reasonably think that Joseph and Mary should seek any education for him in them; and I know no reason why we should think, that he who abhorred not the womb of the virgin, nor a stable, nor a manger, should abhor the works of an honest vocation, and not much more abhor an idle life. But we dispute about these things in vain, being such as to which we can never be satisfied (God having hidden them from our knowledge); what is for our instruction is told us, he *was subject unto his parents*. This teacheth the greatest and highest mortals to honour their fathers and mothers; *which* (saith the apostle) *is the first commandment with promise*. Solomon honoured his mother, and behold a greater than Solomon is here, paying his homage also both to the womb that bare him, and to his (supposed) father that provided for him, and protected him.

But his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. Mary was no forgetful hearer, some things she did not yet clearly understand, but she kept them in her heart; and those who do so as to God's word shall in time understand them.

Luke 2:52

Ver. 52. If any ask how he, who was the eternal Wisdom of the Father, (who is the only wise God), increased in wisdom, they must know that all things in Scripture which are spoken of Christ, are not spoken with respect to his entire person, but with respect to the one or the other nature united in that person; he increased in wisdom, as he did in age, or stature, with respect to his human, not to his Divine nature. And as God daily magnified his grace and favour toward him, so he gave him favour with the neighbourhood, and people of Galilee, so as that when he came forth to be a public minister, he came forth as a bishop (the chief Bishop of souls especially) ought to do, having a good repute even of those who were

without. And thus we leave our Saviour's history, for about eighteen years of which the history of the gospel tells us nothing.

Luke 3:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 3:1-14 The preaching and baptism of John.

Lu 3:15-18 His testimony of Christ.

Lu 3:19,20 Herod imprisons John for his free reproof.

Lu 3:21,22 Christ is baptized, and receiveth testimony from heaven.

Lu 3:23-38 The age and genealogy of Christ from Joseph upwards.

Ver. 1,2. The evangelist having given us an account both of the birth of John the Baptist and of our Saviour, and of all the prophecies preceding and attending them both, leaving the history of our Saviour a little, cometh to give us an account of the history of John the Baptist, his entrance upon his public ministry, and fulfilling of it. John the Baptist had six months seniority of our Saviour, and probably did appear so long before him to the world as a public minister; the time of his beginning was in *the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar*. Tiberius Caesar was he who next succeeded Augustus (for all the Roman emperors after Julius Caesar were called Caesars, as all the kings of Egypt were called Pharaohs): he was as wicked a prince as most who ruled the Roman empire. Herod the Great (in whose time Christ was born) was some time since dead. Archelaus began to rule in his stead as a king, but the Romans changing the government from a monarchy to a tetrarchy, (that is, a government of four), Archelaus had only the government of Judea; Herod Antipas, another son of Herod the Great, had the government of Galilee under the title of tetrarch; Philip, another son of his, had the government of Iturea and Trachonitis, under the same title of tetrarch; and one Lysanias had the government of Abilene: all four strangers. So as at this time the Jews were all under the government of foreigners, the sceptre or government was wholly departed from Judah. Archelaus was soon after sent into France, and Pontius Pilate made procurator or governor of Judea and Samaria. Annas and Caiaphas were the high priests. By the law of God, the eldest son of the family of Aaron

was to be the high priest. How there came to be at this time two high priests is not agreed amongst interpreters. Those who are curious in this inquiry may see what Mr. Pool hath collected for their satisfaction in his Synopsis. We must know, that at this time the Jews were under the power of the Romans, and all things amongst them were out of order. Some say the Jews had liberty to choose their high priest, but then their conquerors would turn him out, and sell the place to another. Others say that the high priest had his deputy, who also obtained the same title. Others think, that as they had made the high priesthood an office, to which they chose one annually, (which was by God's law an office for life), so the high priest of the former year still retained his title for another year. We are at no certainty in these things. It is certain that at this time there were two that bore the title of the high priest, upon what account we cannot tell. It appeareth from Joh 18:13, that the same men three or four years after bore this title of high priest, whether chosen again or not we do not know.

But this was the time when *the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness*; the same John of which we heard before. The word of the Lord came to him, commanding him out to preach the gospel. It is a phrase which is often used in the Old Testament, to signify the influence of the Spirit of God upon the prophets, quickening them to their work; and signifieth to us, that no man ought to take this honour unto himself until he be called of God, nor to speak in the name of the Lord until first the word of God cometh to him.

Luke 3:3

Ver. 3. How long the time of John's ministry was before he was shut up by Herod in prison the Holy Scriptures do not certainly tell us; but it must be very short, for our Saviour's time was little more than three years, and we hear of his imprisonment in the beginning of our Saviour's public ministry. All that we have of John's ministry is to be found either in this chapter, or in Mt 3:1-17, or in Mr 1:1-45, or in the Joh 1:1-51 3:1-36. From them all it appeareth, that the sum of his doctrine was, the necessity of repentance, and faith in Christ, in order to the remission of sins. His pressing faith in Christ is most clearly declared by the evangelist John. Matthew, Mark, and Luke insist more upon his preaching the *doctrine of repentance for the*

remission of sins, and baptism as an evidence of it. Which doctrine or repentance he pressed both from evangelical motives, *The kingdom of heaven is at hand*, and from legal motives, or arguments of terror, *The axe is now laid unto the root of the trees*: in this setting an example to all ministers of the gospel, showing them what should be the main subjects of their discourses, for we shall find that our Saviour preached the same doctrine, and in the same method. What is here said we before opened: See Poole on "Mt 3:2". See Poole on "Mr 1:4". John did not preach that baptism was repentance, or that remission of sins was infallibly annexed to it, but that the way to obtain remission of sins was by repentance, and that baptism was an external sign and symbol of it.

Luke 3:4

Ver. 4-6. All four of the evangelists apply that prophecy, Isa 40:3-5, to John the Baptist. Luke only repeats what is Lu 3:5,6 and in Isa 40:4,5, and he doth but shortly repeat what is in the prophet, Lu 3:5; the prophet saith, *And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*. But there is nothing more usual than for the writers in the New Testament, in their quotations out of the Old Testament, to repeat the sum of the sense, not the words strictly. For the understanding of that prophecy, we must know, that there the prophet Isaiah was sent to comfort those amongst the Jews who feared God, partly with the assurance of them that they should return from Babylon, their warfare should have an end, Cyrus should deliver them; partly with the assurance of them of a far greater deliverance, in and by the coming of the Messiah (of whom Cyrus was but a type): to this purpose the prophet sets out both Cyrus, and in that type Christ's coming, as if both were present and at hand. Kings and great princes coming (especially with armies) have usually some coming before them, as pioneers, to prepare their way, by levelling rough places, and removing whatsoever is in the way of their motions, and filling up holes and ditches, &c.; nor are they far off when once their harbingers and pioneers are arrived, or are seen coming. John is here set out as a harbinger to Christ, to prepare his way, or a pioneer, to fill up ditches, throw down hills, to make rough ways smooth, and every way to prepare the way for him: that *all flesh* might *see the salvation of God*. And as princes that have wildernesses to pass through have more need of their pioneers to prepare and smooth their ways; so the

state of the Jews being now confused, as a wilderness, and corrupt above measure, John the Baptist was sent before to cry in the wilderness, &c. This I take to be the true sense of the prophecy, and that it is mighty vain to strain these metaphorical phrases, and inquire what is meant by valleys, mountains, and crooked ways; they all most certainly signify the same thing, viz. whatsoever might be a hinderance to people's receiving of Christ; and to philosophize further about them, is but to show the luxury of our wit, rather than any solidity of judgment. The whole scope of these three verses is but to show, that as kings, and princes, and governors of armies, have used to have harbingers and pioneers, or other officers, to go before them, to remove things out of the way of them and their retinue, and to prepare their way; so had Christ, and John the Baptist was the man whom the Lord pitched upon for that purpose, by his preaching to bring men to it sense of their sins, and off from their wicked courses, and to show them their need of a Saviour; that so when Christ came himself forth to preach, people might not be wholly ignorant, but in some measure prepared to receive the joyful tidings of the gospel, which he brought unto them.

Luke 3:9

Ver. 9. See Poole on "Mt 3:7", and following verses to Mt 3:10, where we met with all this with no alteration, save that Matthew saith that he spoke this to the Pharisees and Sadducees, seeing them come to his baptism: though he did especially intend them, yet he spake in the hearing of the multitude, amongst whom they were.

Luke 3:10

Ver. 10,11. Although the preaching of the law doth not immediately conduce to work in us faith in Christ, yet mediately it doth, as it brings men to cry out, as those Ac 2:37, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* or as the jailer, Ac 16:1-40, *Sirs, what shall we do to be saved?* John

preaching God's terrors hath this effect upon the people, they ask him, *What shall we do then?* The Baptist's answer may seem a little strange to those who do not consider, that it amounts to the same with Daniel's counsel to Nebuchadnezzar, Da 4:27, *Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor;* and what John had said, Lu 3:8, *Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance.* Our Saviour said much the same, Lu 11:41, *Give alms of such things as ye have;* and Peter commandeth, 1Pe 4:8, *Above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.* Solomon saith it *covereth all sins*, Pr 10:12. The people's question was, *What shall we do?* What are the fruits meet for repentance, that is, truly indicative of repentance? To this now John answereth, *He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none.* Which must not be interpreted, as obliging every one that had two coats to give away one; but as instructive of us, that ceremonies and ritual performances, in which that age abounded, would not serve their turn, but true and real good works, relieving the poor to their ability, out of their superfluities, from obedience and love to God; not merely pitying them, and saying to them, *Go ye and be ye clothed, or be warmed;* not saying *Corban*, and thinking that would excuse them from relieving their parents, or other poor people, but according to their ability relieving them. John doth not here countenance Anabaptist levelling, he only cautions them against Pharisaical hypocrisy, trusting to external privileges, such as having Abraham to their father, or some ritual and ceremonial performances, while in the mean time they neglected the weighty things of the law, of which Christ hath taught us that mercy is one.

Luke 3:12

Ver. 12,13. We have showed often before that the publicans were men that collected the public revenue. In all times that sort of men have been charged with exactions of what was more than their due. The Baptist, as a fruit or indication of the truth of their repentance, cautions them against exaction, thereby declaring, that acts of justice as well as mercy are true fruits of repentance, and that repentance is vainly pretended while men go on in the same sinful courses wherein they have formerly walked. Our Lord here doth not disapprove of the office of publicans, nor certainly was

that to be condemned: if magistrates may impose taxes and payments, which without question they may, for the support of the government for our protection, there is no question but they may appoint officers under what titles they please to collect it. But both those that impose and those that collect such payments are obliged to the rule of justice; the former, to impose no more than is necessary for the end, and in a just proportion; the others, to exact no more than what is appointed them.

Luke 3:14

Ver. 14. A good and faithful minister of Christ should be one able to bring out of his storehouse things new and old, to give every one their portion in their season, and so courageous and faithful as not to be afraid to do it, nor for any reason decline the doing of it. Such was John the Baptist. These were the Roman soldiers, kept by them to maintain their conquest of Judea. Some of these also come to hear John the Baptist preach: hearing him press repentance, and bringing forth fruits that might testify the truth of it, they ask what they should do. John saith to them, *Do violence to no man, &c.* Experience hath taught all people, that soldiers (especially employed to keep garrisons amongst a conquered people) are often very insolent, and for their own gain prone to accuse innocent persons, and the jealousy of conquerors often allows them too easy an ear; as also how apt they are by oppression to mend their short commons, or to exact upon others that they may spend luxuriously. All these are acts or species of injustice, which the Baptist lets them know must be left, if they would bring forth fruits fit for repentance. He doth not blame the employment of a soldier, but only regulates their behaviour in that employment. Wars in just causes are undoubtedly lawful under the gospel, and consequently so is the employment of a soldier; we read of several good centurions or captains of hundreds. But the soldier stands highly concerned to look:

1. That the cause be good in which he draweth his sword.
2. That he behaveth himself in it lawfully, not using any needless violence, not accusing any wrongfully, not endeavouring to mend his pay by any, rapine, or unjustly taking away what is another's, either to spend in luxury, or to uphold himself in his station.

From this instruction of John the Baptist, we may learn several things concerning the nature of repentance.

1. That where there is a true root of repentance, it will bring forth fruits worthy of it.
2. That acts of mercy and justice are true and proper fruits of a true repentance, without which there can be nothing of it in truth.
3. That true repentance is best discovered by our abhorrence of and declining such sinful courses as we have formerly been addicted to, and have daily temptations to from the circumstances of our lives, and those callings, and places, and courses of life wherein the providence of God had fixed us.
4. That these things, repentance and faith, are such proper effects of both, as discover the truth of those gracious habits in the soul, and without which there can be no true evidence of them.

Luke 3:15

Ver. 15. It being known to many what the angel had told Zacharias concerning John thirty years since, and what had miraculously happened at his circumcision, as also what Zacharias his father had prophesied concerning him; and there having been many who had observed the holiness and severity of his life all along, until he came to man's estate; and knowing that the time was fulfilled for the coming of the Messiah, the sceptre being now departed from Judah, and Daniel's weeks being accomplished; and hearing him preach with that life and power which attended his ministry, as also considering his doctrine (not new in itself, being consonant to the Divine law, and the doctrine of the prophets, but) new to them, who had used to hear of rites and ceremonies and the traditions of the elders, but little or nothing of repentance, or bringing forth fruits worthy of it; they began to reason and debate with, themselves, whether John the Baptist were not the Messiah promised, and in great suspense they were about it. But John quickly satisfied them as to that, not desirous to arrogate to himself his honour, whose, messenger only he was.

Luke 3:16

Ver. 16-18. See Poole on "Mt 3:11", See Poole on "Mt 3:12", See Poole on "Mr 1:7", See Poole on "Mr 1:8". John the Baptist in these verses doth not only assure them that he was not the Christ, but also lets them know that Christ was coming amongst them, and that he was more excellent than he, and should *baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire*; with fire as the symbol of the Holy Ghost; so some understand it, expounding it as a prophecy of the descent of the Holy Ghost, Ac 2:3. Others possibly better expound it of the Holy Ghost working in the souls of believers as fire, purging them, and burning up their lusts and corruptions.

And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people: by which words the evangelist lets us know, that what he and the other evangelists have reported concerning John's preaching was but the sum of it.

Luke 3:19

Ver. 19,20. These two verses sufficiently confirm to us, that we are not to expect to find the several passages in the Gospel concerning John the Baptist set down according to the order of time in which they happened, for the evangelist sets down the imprisonment of John before the baptism of Christ, mentioned in the two next verses, which we know could not be as to the order of time, our Saviour being baptized by John. John was in so great repute, that Herod himself *heard him, did many things, and heard him gladly*, Mr 6:20. But John was a faithful preacher, and could not but reprove him for his wicked courses, particularly for his incestuous taking of his brother Philip's wife; for he was alive when he took her, if it be true which historians tell us, that John was imprisoned in the sixteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, and Philip died not till the twentieth; however, his brother leaving issue, (for we read Herodias had a daughter, Mt 14:1-36), it was unlawful for him to have married her, especially to turn away his own wife to take her. Matthew reports this history more fully, in Mt 14:3,4, &c.: See

Poole on "Mt 14:3", See Poole on "Mt 14:4". It is said, that Herod *added yet this above all*, that is, above all his former or other wickedness, *that he shut up John in prison*. This spake him incorrigible in his wicked courses, resisting the remedy, or means to reduce him. A hypocrite may hear the word, and do many things; but he hath always some particular lust, as to which he must be spared, being neither willing to part with it, nor able to bear any reproof for it.

Luke 3:21

Ver. 21,22. This history of our Saviour's baptism is reported both by Matthew and Mark, much most largely by Matthew; See Poole on "Mt 3:13"., &c. Luke only addeth those words, *and praying*, which teacheth us that prayers ought to be joined with baptism. What was the matter of his prayer we are not told, though the following words incline some not improbably to judge that he prayed for some testimony from heaven concerning him.

Luke 3:23

Ver. 23. Here is amongst critics a little dispute, whether our blessed Lord at his baptism (after which he soon began his public ministry) was full *thirty years of age*; ωσει and αρχομενος in the Greek give occasion to the doubt. Those who judge that he was thirty complete, conceive that the age before which the priests and Levites did no service in the tabernacle of God. Nu 4:3 commanded the number of them to be taken *from thirty years old to fifty*, and it was done accordingly, Lu 3:34,35, &c. David, in the latter end of his life, so numbered them, 1Ch 23:3, when their number (of that age) was thirty-eight thousand; yet in that chapter, 1Ch 23:24,27, we find them numbered *from twenty years old and upward*; but possibly that was for some more inferior service. In conformity to this, most think that both John the Baptist and Christ entered not upon their public ministry till they were of that age; but whether they were thirty years of age complete, or current, is a question, but so little a one, as deserves no great study to resolve: the two qualifying words, ωσει and αρχομενος, would incline

one to think Christ was but thirty years of age current, which is advantaged by what others tell us, that the Jews ordinarily called a child two or three years old as soon as it did but enter upon its second or third year. Some think our Saviour was ten months above twenty-nine years of age when he was baptized, after which he was tempted of the devil forty days before he entered the public ministry; but these are little things.

Being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph. Joseph was not his natural father, though so supposed by the Jews, Joseph being indeed his legal father, being married to the virgin when our Saviour was born, Mt 1:20.

Luke 3:24

Ver. 24-38 There have been great disputes about the genealogy of our Saviour, as recorded both by Matthew and Luke. The adversaries of Christian religion have taken no small advantage from the seeming difference between them, which even many sober writers have thought it no easy matter to reconcile. The apostle hath cautioned us against giving too much heed to *endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith*, 1Ti 1:4; yet certainly it is our duty, as well for the stopping the mouths of such as would clamour against the truth of the whole Scripture, (if not of the whole Christian religion), as, so far as we can, to vindicate holy writ from their little cavils, and thereby also to confirm those who are weak in faith. To make these things as clear as we can: It is plain that both the evangelists agree in their design, by setting down the genealogy of our Saviour, to prove him lineally descended both from Abraham and David, the two persons to whom was made the promise of the Messiah, and the stability of his kingdom, and also in the names of the first fourteen generations, mentioned by Matthew, and here by Luke, Lu 3:32,33, and to Abraham, Lu 3:34. Their disagreement lieth in four things.

1. In the form of the pedigree; Matthew beginning with those who were first, Luke with those who were last in order of time. But this is no valuable exception, one evangelist counts forward, another backward.
2. Matthew counts by three periods, each consisting of fourteen generations; Luke doth not: but neither is this of any moment.

3. Matthew sits down our Saviour's genealogy before he tells us any thing of his conception or birth; Luke, after his relation of his conception, birth, and baptism.
4. Matthew derives our Saviour's genealogy but from Abraham; Luke, from Adam.

All these differences lay no foundation for any exception. Several accounts are given why Luke carrieth up the genealogy to Adam; the best seemeth to be this: that Matthew intending his history primarily for the Jews, judged it enough to prove Christ the Son of Abraham, and the Son of David; but Luke designing the information of the whole world, derives him from the common father of mankind. By which means he also showeth the antiquity of the gospel, and lets us know that Christ was he who was promised to Adam, before Abraham's time, and that the grace of the gospel is not limited to the seed of Abraham. Thus also Luke supplieth what was wanting in Matthew, and truly derives both the first and second act from God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of us all. But besides these differences (hardly worth the taking notice of under that notion) there are some seeming contradictions in the genealogies, yet not such but I think a fair account may be given of to any who will but first consider:

1. That they all lie in what Luke hath, from Lu 3:23-31, and from the latter end of Lu 3:34 to the end. So that in Lu 3:32,33, and part of Lu 3:34, we have nothing to reconcile.
2. That these words the son is in the Greek only Lu 3:23, where Christ is said to be "the son of Joseph", but ever after it is supplied by the translators. So as the Greek runs thus: *The Son of Joseph, which was of Heli, which was of Matthat, which was of Levi, which was of Melchi, &c.* Which consideration cuts off the first cavil, how Joseph could be the son of Jacob, as Matthew saith, and the son of Heli, as Luke saith; for indeed Luke saith no more than, *And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, Lu 3:23*; that is, Christ was of Heli, the supposed son of Joseph, but truly of Heli, the father of Mary his mother. I know that some think Jacob was also called Heli (as it was ordinary

with the Jews to have two names); others think that Joseph is called the son, because he was the son-in-law of Heli, by the marriage of the virgin Mary his daughter. (Naomi calleth those her daughters who were but her legal daughters, Ru 1:11.) In this the most agree. But I must confess I think it is Christ, who is here said to be of Heli (though he was reputed, and generally taken, to be the son of Joseph).

3. That Luke is here deriving our Saviour, not from his supposed father Joseph, but from Mary his true mother. It is not to be conceived that Luke, after such a narration of the predictions of his conception as he had given us in the first chapter, should go to derive Christ from Joseph; and this gives us a fair account why the names are so different from David's time to the birth of Christ. Joseph (whose pedigree Matthew relates) deriving from Solomon, who was the son of David, succeeding him in the kingdom. Mary (whose pedigree Luke relates) descending from Nathan, Lu 3:31 1Ch 3:5 tells us he was another son of David. So as after David's time the persons named which before were the same in our Saviour's pedigree became diverse, some the progenitors of Joseph, whom Matthew reckons, others the progenitors of Mary, whom Luke nameth. This answereth the objection from the differing number of the persons from Joseph to Zorobabel (excluding them both). Matthew reckoneth but nine, Luke here reckoneth eighteen, in Lu 3:23-28. From Zorobabel to David Luke reckons twenty-two progenitors, Matthew but fourteen, (leaving out three kings of the half blood of Ahab, of which we gave an account in our notes: See Poole on "Mt 1:1"), so as the Scripture nameth seventeen, though Matthew leaves out three. In two different lines, it is not impossible that one person in so many years might have so many more progenitors than another, supposing Matthew designed to reckon all, which it is plain from his leaving out three kings named in Scripture that he did not.
4. That ordinarily the Jews had two names, sometimes three. All Josiah's sons had each of them two at least. Matthew had also the name of Levi, &c. This solves the difference from Lu 3:27, where Rhesa is said to be the son of Zorobabel, whenas Matthew saith, Mt 1:13, Zorobabel begat Abiud. That Abraham was the son of Terah or Thara, and Terah the son of Nachor, appeareth from Ge 11:24,26. That Saruch or Serug was the son of Reu or Ragau, appeareth from Ge 11:20 1Ch 1:25. That Reu was the son of Peleg, (here called Phalec), and Peleg the son of Eber, and

Eber the son of Sala, appears from Ge 11:18 1Ch 1:25. But in Ge 11:12 we read, that Sala was the son of Arphaxad, whereas he is here said to be the son of Cainan, and Cainan is made the son of Arphaxad. So as Luke maketh Sala grandchild to Arphaxad; Moses makes no mention of Cainan at all, but mentions Salah as begotten by Arphaxad. Those who are curious to know what is said for the resolution of this difficulty, may read it largely both in Spanheim's *Dubia Evangelica*, and Mr. Pool's *Synopsis Criticorum*. It is a difficulty which hath exercised many very learned men, and I doubt whether ever any yet satisfied himself in the resolution of it. It is not probable that Luke should correct what Moses said; the best account I can give of it is, the Septuagint in Ge 11:12 have it just as Luke here hath it; and it is certain that Luke, in his quotations out of the Old Testament, doth generally follow the Septuagint, being the translation most in use among them. Beza tells us of an ancient copy of the Gospel he had, which mentions no Cainan. The best of it is, that it is a matter of no great moment, for the question is not, whether Sala was the son of Arphaxad, (for so he was, though Arphaxad was his grandfather, in the same sense that Christ is called the Son of Abraham, and the Son of David, and Elisabeth the daughter of Aaron, Lu 1:50;) but whether he was the immediate son of Arphaxad or Cainan; whether Moses omitted Cainan, or some transcriber of Luke added Cainan out of the Septuagint (being then the current translation among them): the last is most probable. For the other part of the genealogy, Lu 3:36-38, it plainly agreeth with Ge 5:6 6:10. So that I must profess I see no great difficulty to reconcile the genealogies, admitting the one to give the genealogy of Joseph, and the other to give the genealogy of Mary. That indeed Mary was the daughter of Heli is not to be proved by Scripture, nor yet contradicted, but it is very probably judged so. And though we cannot prove that Cainan, mentioned Lu 3:36, was added out of some later copies of the Septuagint, yet it is more than probable it was so. Which two things if we admit, I see no great difficulty remaining, but a fair agreement between both the evangelists. For I presume none will stumble at the alteration of some letter, or omission of some letter in a name, or addition to it in the end; there is nothing more ordinary than that, when names are mentioned in several languages.

Luke 4:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 4:1-13 Christ fasts forty days, and is tempted of the devil.

Lu 4:14,15 He begins to preach.

Lu 4:16-32 The people of Nazareth wonder at his gracious words, but being offended go about to kill him: he escapeth by miracle.

Lu 4:33-37 He casteth out a devil,

Lu 4:38-39 healeth Simeon's mother-in-law,

Lu 4:40 and many other diseased persons.

Lu 4:41 The devils acknowledging him are silenced.

Lu 4:42-44 He preacheth through the cities of Galilee.

Ver. 1. By the Holy Ghost here is to be understood the gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to the prophecy of him, Isa 11:1,2. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are often in holy writ called the Spirit, Ac 2:4 8:18 10:44: and not only those that are influenced with the saving gifts and graces of the Spirit, are said to have the Spirit, and be filled; but those who received the more extraordinary powers of it, such as the gifts of prophecy, healing, &c. Others besides Christ are in Scripture said to be filled with the Spirit, Ac 6:5; and it was so prophesied concerning John, Lu 1:15. But they had but their measure; to Christ the Spirit was given not by measure, Joh 3:34.

He returned from Jordan: there John baptized, there Christ was baptized by him.

And was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. Ηγετο saith Luke. ἘΑνηχθη saith Matthew. Mark expresses it by the word εκβαλλει. The words do not signify a violent motion, (for without doubt Christ went willingly), but a potent and efficacious motion.

Luke 4:2

Ver. 2. See Poole on "Mt 4:2", and following verses to Mt 4:4.

Luke 4:3

Ver. 3,4 See Poole on "Mt 4:3". See Poole on "Mt 4:4". It is very observable, that Christ here asserts the authority of the Scriptures; and though he was full of the Holy Ghost, yet maketh the Holy Scripture his rule of action.

Luke 4:5

Ver. 5-8. See Poole on "Mt 4:8". See Poole on "Mt 4:9". See Poole on "Mt 4:10". Those words, Lu 4:6, *for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it,* are only mentioned by Luke; where we may observe, that the devil was a liar from the beginning. The dominion over the things of the world was not given to the angels, but to man. Neither hath he any such power as he pretends to, being not able to do any thing against Job till he had obtained leave from God, nor to enter into the swine without licence first obtained from Christ.

Luke 4:9

Ver. 9-12. See Poole on "Mt 4:5". See Poole on "Mt 4:6". See Poole on

"Mt 4:7". What Matthew calls *the holy city*, Luke expoundeth *Jerusalem*.

Luke 4:13

Ver. 13. Matthew saith, the devil left him, *and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him*. Luke saith, *he departed from him for a season, when he had ended all the temptation*. Those words, *for a season*, seem to intimate that our Saviour had further conflicts with the devil than are here mentioned; and possibly those words, *all the temptation*, may hint us, that the devil offered more temptations than the evangelist have recorded, though some affirm that all temptations fall under those which are the heads of these temptations, and think those words, *for a season*, signify until the time of his passion, when he entered into the heart of Judas, and armed all his instruments against this Captain of our salvation.

Luke 4:14

Ver. 14,15. Both Matthew and Mark make the occasion of our Saviour's going into Galilee to be his hearing that John was cast into prison. But certainly Matthew and Mark speak of a second going into Galilee, and mean by it Galilee of the Gentiles, which was in the jurisdiction of Philip, the brother of Herod Antipas. Else one might admire, why Christ should go into Galilee upon hearing that John was cast into prison; that had been for him to have thrown himself into Herod's mouth, before that his time of suffering was come; but it should seem that after his temptations, he first went to Capernaum, where he did not stay many days, Joh 2:12, and then to Nazareth, which was his own country. But others think that all the evangelists speak of a second going into Galilee, which I cannot agree if Nazareth were within that Galilee which was called the Lower Galilee, and was within the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas, who was the tetrarch of Galilee, and the man that had imprisoned John, and afterwards caused him to be beheaded.

And he taught in their synagogues: he had the reputation of a prophet,

which procured him that liberty of speaking in all those places, where the Jews celebrated their public worship; *being glorified*, that is, admired and honoured, *of all*.

Luke 4:16

Ver. 16. We heard before, Lu 2:39,51, that Christ was brought up at Nazareth; we read of him at Nazareth, Mt 13:54. But I must confess I doubt whether Matthew there, and Luke here, speak of the same time. Of the nature of the Jewish synagogues, and their order of worship there, and the reading of the Scriptures in them, we have spoken before in our notes on Mt 4:23. See Poole on "Mt 4:23".

Luke 4:17

Ver. 17-19. The words differ in some things from the words of the prophet out of which they are quoted, Isa 61:1, where is nothing of recovering of sight to the blind; but they exactly agree with the Septuagint version, only, Lu 4:19, they have *καλεσαι*, to call, and Luke hath *κηρυξαι*, to preach, according to which probably the copies of the Septuagint in use with them were. It was their manner in the synagogues for the minister (an officer appointed to that purpose, see Lu 4:20) to bring the book of the law or of the prophets which was to be read, and to deliver it to him that officiated for that time, who, when he had read, redelivered it to the same officer to be laid up. Their writers tell us, that the books of Moses were divided into several portions, which they were tied to read in order; but for the books of the prophets, he that officiated was more at liberty to read in what place and proportion he pleased. Our Lord readeth Isa 61:1, which, according to the Septuagint copy, was as Luke here translated; and by the way, this custom of the writers of the New Testament, (writing in Greek), to quote texts out of the Old Testament, very often according to that Septuagint translation, may, first, give us some account of the difficulty we met with Lu 3:1-38, where Sala was made the son of Cainan, and the grandchild of Arphaxad, whereas Moses mentions no Cainan, Ge 11:1-32 Luke, taking the quotation of the Septuagint, might put it in according to them, for they have it in Ge 11:12. Secondly, it may learn us not to be too curious as to

minute things in Scripture, for had it been a thing of moment, the Holy Spirit of God had certainly never suffered Luke to write after their copy, either there or here. God never had a church in any place, but he soon stirred up some to make an interpretation of the Scriptures for their use, and so far assisted them, that though they might differ from the Hebrew text, or the Greek, in some minute things, yet they differed not in any thing of moment necessary for us to know and believe in order to salvation. And the frequent quotations we have in the New Testament out of the Septuagint, incline us to think that it is the will of God, that particular persons in churches should make use of such versions, and take them for the Holy Scriptures, not lightly and ordinarily varying from them; the translating of Scriptures, being not an ordinary ministerial gift, but the work of some stirred up by God unto it, and whom he more than ordinarily so assists, as that they have not erred in any momentous thing. If this may be admitted, we need not lay the fault upon those who transcribed Luke's copy. But let us come to the text itself.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me. Anointing may signify two things:

1. The endowment of the person with gifts and abilities fit for his work. Thus, 1Jo 2:27, *the anointing* is said to *teach us all things*; and Christ is said, Ps 45:7 Heb 1:9, to be *anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows*, which the Baptist seemeth to interpret, Joh 3:34, *God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him*.
2. Anointing also was a symbol of God's calling out and sending a person to the execution of an office, 2Ki 9:6.
3. I find also anointing used as a symbol of God's purpose and designation of a person to an employment, to the performance of which he did not presently call him; thus David was anointed, 1Sa 16:13.

By *the Spirit of the Lord is upon me*, I conceive is meant, exciting and quickening Christ to the present execution of that office to which God had anointed him; that is:

1. Of old designed him;

2. Fitted him, giving him the Spirit not by measure;
3. Now called him to the exercise of it: and because the Lord had so designed him, so prepared, and now so called him, the Spirit now excited and quickened him.

God stirreth up none to take upon them the office of the ministry, whom he hath not fitted with gifts for the discharge of it. But what was this employment to which Christ was anointed? εὐαγγελιζεσθαι, *to preach the gospel to the poor*. This was the great work of our Lord and Saviour, to preach. And what? The gospel, the glad tidings of salvation. To whom? ητῶχοις: it is used to signify those that are mean in the world, and, by a figure, those that are miserable and afflicted; and this I should take to be the sense here, in conformity to that other phrase which our Saviour useth to John's disciples, Mt 6:5, and to that of the apostle, 1Co 1:27. Christ was first sent to *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, who were all at this time in a poor afflicted state and condition, and amongst them chiefly to the meaner sort. The rulers believed not on him, Joh 7:48; to teach ministers what Erasmus saith, *Nulla nobis anima vilis videri debet, pro qua Dominus gloriae mori non est dedignatus*, That they are too proud that despise the poor, and that we ought not to count any soul vile for which he who was the Lord of glory disdained not to die: we may add, to which the great Minister of the circumcision took himself to be anointed to preach.

I had rather thus understand it, than of such as are poor in spirit; which seem to be understood in the next words, *he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted*, whether wounded in the sense of sin, or melted in the sense of mercy: the whole hearted are such as see no need of repentance, no need of a Saviour; Christ came not to heal these; *The whole need not a physician*.

It followeth, *to preach deliverance to the captives*; to let them know, that are yet slaves to sin and to their lusts, that there is a way for their deliverance.

And recovering of sight to the blind; to let all blind sinners know, that there is an eye salve discovered, which if applied will recover their spiritual sight.

To set at liberty them that are bruised: it is of the same significance with binding up the broken in heart.

To preach the acceptable year of the Lord; the true jubilee, when every soul may be set free from the bonds of its sins, 2Co 6:17; the year of God's good will; that the time was now come, when in every nation he that feared God, and wrought righteousness, should be *accepted with him*, Ac 10:35.

Luke 4:20

Ver. 20,21. Christ observeth the order used in their synagogues, when he that officiates had read such a portion out of the law as was appointed, or out of the prophets, as he pleased, he closed the book, or the roll, and gave it again to the officer, whose work it was to bring it, and then to carry it back, and lay it up; and then sat down, while he made his exhortation upon it. This Christ did, the people being in the mean time very attentive to hear what he would say. He begins to speak, and telleth them this was a prophecy concerning him,

This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears; that is, it is fulfilled in me, either primarily, or as I am the antitype to Cyrus. We must not think that this was all which Christ said, but thus he began his discourse.

Luke 4:22

Ver. 22. All that heard our Saviour in the synagogue *bare him witness*. Of what? Not that he was the Messiah, much less the Son of God; but they praised his discourse in opening the prophecy: they did not believe in him, but they admired the wisdom and piety of his discourses, they admired the effects of the grace of God in him, his *gracious words*. But see the wretchedness of carnal hearts, in their proneness to take no prejudices, to choke the beginnings of any convictions in themselves. They do not admire the power of Divine grace, that it could so far influence one of so

mean an education as they took Christ to have had; but dreaming that the kingdom of God must come with observation, and the coming of the Messiah must be in great outward splendour and glory, they stumble at his parents, because (though of the house of David) they were of so mean a visible quality.

Luke 4:23

Ver. 23,24. Christ here tells those of Nazareth what was in their hearts, viz. that they in their hearts contemned him, because of the meanness of his parentage, and challenged him to confirm his doctrine by miracles, urging that Nazareth was his own country, and physicians in the first place ought to cure themselves, and their friends, and those of their own families; they therefore challenge him to work some such miracles as he had before wrought in Capernaum, as they had heard. He gives them the reason why he did no miracles amongst them, viz. because he discerned that they contemned them, as is very usual for persons, according to that common saying: *No prophet is accepted in his own country.* The reference here to some things done before this time in Capernaum, would incline us to think that after Christ's temptations he first went to Cana of Galilee, where he wrought his first miracle, Joh 2:1, turning the water into wine, then to Capernaum, where he staid not many days, Joh 2:12, then to Nazareth; but hearing that John was cast into prison, he removed from Nazareth to Capernaum, out of the jurisdiction of Herod, under the milder government of Philip his brother.

Luke 4:25

Ver. 25-27. The two stories to which our Saviour refers are those 1Ki 17:9 2Ki 5:14. But the question is what our Saviour intended to teach them by these stories, which made them so exceeding angry, as we shall find by and by. I answer, several things, none of which pleased them.

1. The freeness of God's distinguishing grace. That God was not bound to give to all the same aid, and means of grace, that he gave some. This is a doctrine the world was never patient to hear. That God will have

mercy on whom he will have mercy. We would fain make God a debtor to us. Those of Nazareth think they had as good, if not a better, right to Christ's miracles than those of Capernaum. I tell you, saith Christ, God is a Sovereign in his acts of grace, and acts freely, and I can do no miracles but where he will have them done.

2. That it is through the fault of men, if they receive not the benefits of Divine grace. If the Israelites would have entertained Elijah, he might have been sent to them, as well as to Sarepta. If the lepers in Israel would have sought out and come to Elisha they might have been healed. If you would have received me, and believed in me, you might have seen what those of Capernaum did; it is because of your contempt and unbelief that I can show you no miracles. If any say, If God had put it into the hearts of the widows in Israel, or the lepers there, they would also have entertained Elijah, and have sought out and come to Elisha: why did not God put it into their hearts? To this the answer is ready: Who art thou that disputest with God? Why doth the clay reply upon the potter? Even so, O Father, for so it pleaseth thee. However, the failures of the lepers in Israel, and the widows there, and of those in Nazareth, was in a great measure in their duty, as to things within their power to do by virtue of that common grace which God denieth to none: he might justly deny his special influences, while they neglected to make use of his more common influences.
3. That in every nation he that feared God, and wrought righteousness, was ever accepted of him. God had no respect to this country, or that country; he sent Elijah to do good to a Sidonian, and Elisha to do good to a Syrian, while he neglected the ungrateful and disobedient Israelites. Thus he also not obscurely hints, that for their unbelief, and rejection of, and disobedience to him, God would send his gospel to the Gentiles, and reject them, which came to pass within a few years after. None of all these were grateful sounds in the ears of the men of Nazareth. You ask me (saith our Saviour) why I do not such things here at Nazareth as I did at Capernaum. I was not sent to you. No; but were not they some of the lost sheep of Israel? Ah! but Christ was no more sent to all Israel, than Elias was sent to all the widows in Israel. He was sent to preach to them all, but for any special, signal favours, he was sent but to some, and those some were such as did not proudly reject and contemn him, but receive him.

Luke 4:28

Ver. 28-30. Unhappy Nazareth, where Christ had now lived more than thirty years! They had seen him growing up, increasing *in wisdom and stature, and in favour both with God and man*, Lu 2:52; they had had the first fruits of his ministry, and, Lu 4:22, they *bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth*; they knew his education, so as they could not think he had this wisdom and knowledge from any advantages of that, but must have it from Heaven; yet when they hear him preaching, and but touching them for their contempt and rejection of him, and tacitly comparing them with their forefathers in the time of Ahab, and preaching the doctrine of God's sovereign and free grace, and hinting to them that the grace of God should pass to the Gentiles, while they should be rejected, they are not able to bear him. Thus, Ac 22:21, the Jews heard Paul patiently, till he repeated God's commission to him to go *unto the Gentiles*; then they cried, *Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit he should live*. This was according to the old prophecy, De 32:21, (applied to the Jews by the apostle, Ro 10:19), that because they had *moved God to jealousy with that which is not God, he would move them to jealousy with them that are not a people, and provoke them to anger with a foolish nation*. This is further matter of observation, that wretched sinners, who cannot obtain of their lusts to be as good and holy as others, yet are ordinarily so proud, as they have no patience to hear that others are better than they, or have or shall have any more special share in God's favour. Those of Nazareth which were in the synagogue hearing these things, are filled with wrath, *thrust Christ out of the city*, as not fit to live among them, and go about to kill him, by throwing him down headlong from the brow of the hill upon which their city was built.

But he passing through the midst of them went his way. How he got out of their hands, when they had laid hold of him, the Scripture doth not tell us, nor is it our concern to be curious to inquire. We read much the like passage, Joh 8:59, when the Jews had taken up stones to stone him. We know it was an easy thing for him, who was God as well as man, to quit

himself of any mortal enemies; but how he did it, whether by blinding their eyes, or altering the nature of his body, and making it imperceptible by them, or by a greater strength than they, (which the Divine nature could easily supply his human nature with), who is able to determine?

Luke 4:31

Ver. 31,32. Capernaum was a city in the other Galilee, under the jurisdiction of Philip, whither Matthew and Mark mention our Saviour's motion upon the report of the imprisonment of John. Philip is not only by historians reported of a less bloody temper than his brother Herod, but Herod having taken away his wife, it is very probable that there was no good understanding between him and Philip. So that two things promised our Saviour more quiet in Philip's jurisdiction:

1. The tameness of his temper.
2. The hatred between him and Herod.

It appears, from Lu 4:23, he had been at Capernaum before, but stayed very little, hastening to his own country of Nazareth in the other Galilee: from thence he now again removeth, hearing of John's imprisonment, and seeing the baseness of his countrymen. When he came there, he keeps on his course preaching upon the Jewish sabbath, not abolished till his resurrection. It appeareth by Lu 4:33, that he preached in the synagogue here also.

It is said that the people *were astonished at his doctrine*. Astonishment is one thing, believing is another. Men may be some ways and to some degrees affected at the word of God, that yet are far enough from believing, as the most of these Capernautes were; else Christ had never upbraided them as he did, Mt 11:23.

For his word was with power. That this phrase is to be understood only of those powerful and miraculous operations, by which Christ confirmed the word which he preached to be from God, I cannot yield. It is better

interpreted by Mr 1:22, *He taught them as one that had authority, not as the scribes*; and to be understood of the gravity and spirituality of his doctrine, his majesty and life in the delivering of it, and the power of God going along with it for the conviction of sinners; to all which were added his miraculous operations, of which the evangelist goeth on giving us a more particular account.

Luke 4:33

Ver. 33-37. We met with the same history related as done in Capernaum, and with the same circumstances, See Poole on "Mr 1:21". See Poole on "Mr 1:22", &c.

Luke 4:38

Ver. 38,39. We met with this history both in Matthew and Mark. See Poole on "Mt 8:14", and following verses to Mt 8:15. See Poole on "Mr 1:29", and following verses to Mr 1:31.

Luke 4:40

Ver. 40,41. See Poole on "Mr 1:32", and following verses to Mr 1:34, where we met with the same things.

Luke 4:42

Ver. 42-44. See Poole on "Mr 1:35", and following to Mr 1:39, where that evangelist reports the same things that this evangelist mentions, only with

more circumstances. Mark saith, he went out a great while before day into a solitary place to pray. He saith also that Simon and others followed him, and found him, and told him that all men sought him. Luke addeth that the others desired him not to depart from thence. They desired his stay, in order to his miracles, the healing of their sick, dispossessing demoniacs, &c. Christ replied, (as Mark saith), *Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for therefore came I forth.* Luke saith he told them, *he must preach the gospel of the kingdom to other cities also; for therefore he was sent.* Accordingly, (saith Luke), he did preach *in the synagogues of Galilee.* Mark adds also that he cast out devils. How can any think that preaching the gospel is not the great work of the minister of Christ, but prayers are to be preferred before it, or administering the sacraments greater, when it is expressly said, that Christ *baptized none, but his disciples,* Joh 4:2; and Paul saith, Christ sent him *not to baptize, but to preach the gospel;* and Christ omitted opportunities of working miracles that he might preach to other cities, and only wrought miracles to confirm the doctrine he preached; and we so often read of his going about preaching and teaching, never of his praying, but alone with his disciples, or in a mountain or solitary place; (though doubtless he, or some others, did pray at their worship in the synagogues); unless any will be so mad as to think, that the sole end of preaching was to convert men from Judaism, or paganism, to an outward owning and professing of Christ, though under that profession, by reason of their sottish ignorance and debauched lives, they remain twice more the children of the devil than many Jews and pagans are? What was Christ's great work is certainly his ministers', viz. to preach the gospel of the kingdom.

Luke 5:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 5:1-3 Christ teacheth the people out of Simon's ship.

Lu 5:4-11 The miraculous draught of fishes: Simon and the two sons of Zebedee follow him.

Lu 5:12-15 Christ cleanseth a leper,

Lu 5:16 prayeth in the wilderness,

Lu 5:17-26 answereth the reasonings of the scribes and Pharisees concerning his forgiving sins, and healeth the sick of the palsy,
Lu 5:27,28 calleth Levi from the receipt of custom,
Lu 5:29-32 justifieth his eating with publicans and sinners,
Lu 5:33-35 excuses his disciples from fasting for the present,
Lu 5:36-39 and illustrates the matter by a twofold parable.

Ver. 1,2. It is by many interpreters thought that Luke in this history, to Lu 5:11, doth but give us a larger account of what Matthew, Mt 4:18, and Mark, Mr 1:16, told us shortly. The sea of Galilee (as they call it) and the lake of Gennesaret were both the same, receiving the different denomination from the opposite coasts between which it was. $\eta\alpha\rho\alpha$ $\tau\eta\nu$ $\lambda\iota\mu\nu\eta\nu$ had been better translated *upon*, or *at*, than *by the lake*, for without doubt the two ships here mentioned were upon the water, though possibly fastened as usually to the shore.

Luke 5:3

Ver. 3-11. Here is a plain and orderly story, related with many circumstances, tending to show us the power and influence of God upon men's successes, in their honest and ordinary callings, and also that God hath a command upon the fish in the sea; together with an account of Christ's call of Simon Peter to be a preacher of the gospel. The only difficulty is to reconcile this to what Matthew tells us, Mt 4:18,19, &c. Matthew's words are these: *And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship, and their father, and followed him.* Mark's relation doth much agree with Matthew's. The differences are in these things:

1. Matthew and Mark speak of Christ's calling these disciples as he was walking by the sea. Luke seems to mention it as done in the ship.

Answer: Luke doth not say that Christ spake so to Simon in the ship, though he doth indeed mention those words to Simon, before he mentions their bringing the ship to land, because possibly he would give account of all that Christ did or spake together.

2. a) They might be out of the ship, walking by the sea, before he called James and John, whose call Luke doth not mention, but Matthew and Mark alone.

b) Matthew and Mark mention no ships, nor going of Christ into any, nor any draught of fishes.

Answer: Matthew saith that he saw Simon and Andrew casting their nets into the sea. But there is nothing more ordinary than for one evangelist to relate more fully what another repeateth summarily.

3. Matthew and Mark speak of Andrew being with Simon; Luke mentions Simon alone.

Answer: Luke denies not that Andrew was there, and we are sure Simon alone could not manage the nets with such a draught of fishes.

4. Matthew and Mark speak of the calling of Simon, Andrew, James, and John; Luke only of the calling of Simon.

Answer: It doth not follow from thence that they were not called during Christ's walk by the sea after he came out of the ship: Matthew and Mark assure us they were.

5. Matthew and Mark say that James and John were mending their nets.

Answer: Luke saith nothing to the contrary, for he doth not mention their call at that instant when Simon was. That immediately after such a draught of fishes their nets should want mending, and they be so employed, is nothing at all strange. So as it was like there was a little distance of time

between the call of Peter and the others; yet Luke, omitting some circumstances mentioned by Matthew and Mark, as well as adding much to this history by them omitted, saith (at least) of more than one, *they forsook all, and followed him*. Hence appeareth that there may be a coherent history, taking in what all three evangelists say, only allowing that Christ came upon the shore, and walked by the sea side some short time, before he called James and John.

The history instructs us:

1. How good a thing it is for men to be employed in their honest callings, though never so mean. There God meets people with blessings.
2. How much it is our duty to yield obedience to God's commands, and how advantageous it will prove, how contrary soever they appear to our sense and reason.
3. Upon whom our blessing depends, let our labour be what it will.
4. That it is the work of the ministers of the gospel to catch men, to gain souls to God.
5. How powerful God's calls are: *They forsook all, and followed him*.

For the difference between what John saith, Joh 1:40,41, of the call of Andrew and Simon, from what the other three evangelists say, we have spoken something in our notes: See Poole on "Mt 4:18", and shall add more when we come to that place in John. In short, John speaketh of another time, before that either of them were called to follow Christ.

Luke 5:12

Ver. 12-15. See Poole on "Mt 8:2", and verses following to Mt 8:5. See Poole on "Mr 1:40", and verses following to Mr 1:45. Matthew reports this miracle done when Christ *came down from the mountain*, and immediately after saith, that he entered into Capernaum, Mt 8:5. Mark also, concluding the first chapter with this piece of history, he begins the second with telling us, that *he entered into Capernaum after some days*. So that some think he was near Capernaum, within the bounds of it, when he wrought this miracle, but there is no certainty of that.

Luke 5:16

Ver. 16. We meet with Christ often commending to us the duty of secret prayer, by his own example, as he had done by his precept, Mt 6:1-34, and always choosing for it the most private and retired places, to teach us to go and to do likewise, often to pray to our Father which seeth in secret: and his example more presseth us, because we have much more business with God in prayer than he had; he had no sins to confess, nor to beg pardon for, no need to ask for any sanctifying habits of grace, &c. It is possible also that he withdrew into desert places oft times to avoid all show of ostentation, or dangers of tumults, and to obtain a little rest for himself. But suppose that the reason of his motion, yet the spending of his leisure hours in communion with his Father is very imitable for us. Christ had no idle hours, he was always either preaching or healing, thereby doing good to others; or praying, thereby paying a homage to God. If it could be said of the Roman, (with respect to his studies), it should be much more said of Christians, They should never be less alone than when they are alone, nor less idle than when they are most at leisure from their public employments.

Luke 5:17

Ver. 17. We shall observe that the scribes and Pharisees much haunted our Saviour wherever he came, either to cavil at him, or out of curiosity to see

the miracles he wrought. It seems they were many of them present at this time. But here ariseth a question or two.

1. How is it said, *the power of the Lord was present with Christ to heal?* had not Christ this power of healing then at all times?

Answer: Doubtless he had, for he was always *the Lord that healeth us*. The Divine nature once united to the human was never separated from Christ, but it did not always put forth itself, being as to that directed by his will. But as the end of Christ's miracles was for the confirmation of his doctrine; so we shall observe, that mostly after preaching he wrought his miraculous operations.

2. Who are here meant by *them*? by reading the words one would think *them* related to the *Pharisees and doctors of the law*, of none of which we read that they were sick, nor do we read of any cures that Christ made upon them.

Answer: We must know that sometimes in holy writ these relative terms are put out of due order, as in Mt 11:1, where we have these words, *And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities*: not in the disciples' cities; poor men, they had no cities; but in the Jewish cities, the cities of that country: yet the verse mentions no other persons than Jesus and the twelve disciples.

So here, though the verse mentions no other persons present than the Pharisees and doctors of the law, yet there doubtless were many others, and some amongst them labouring under chronical distempers; of these the text is to be understood.

Luke 5:18

Ver. 18-26. See Poole on "Mt 9:2", and following verses to Mt 9:8. See Poole on "Mr 2:3", and following verses to Mr 2:12. Both those evangelists record the same story with very small alterations in the phrase, nothing in the sense. Instead of the last words, *We have seen strange things today*, Matthew saith, *they glorified God, who had given such*

power unto men. By which appeareth that all the effect this miracle had was,

1. Amazement. A thing was done; they understood not how it could be effected.
2. They apprehended a Divine power as to the effect.

They therefore *glorified God, who had given such power unto men.* So as it is plain they only looked upon Christ as a great Prophet, to whom God had communicated such a Divine power, as of old he had communicated to Elijah, and then to Elisha. Lest any should stumble at what is said, that they uncovered the house, and let him down through the tiling, fancying the roofs of their houses built as ours, they must know, that the most of their houses were built (like some amongst us) with flat roofs, which were covered with some slates or stones, so as they might easily be uncovered; and this appeareth by the command of God, De 22:8, concerning making battlements on the tops of their houses, to prevent casualties. The object of the faith here mentioned, was plainly the Divine power and goodness, but not as coming from Christ originally, as eternal God, but as an instrument by which God conveyed it to men under such miserable circumstances as this poor man was.

Luke 5:27

Ver. 27-32. See Poole on "Mt 9:9", and following verses to Mt 9:13. See Poole on "Mr 2:14", and following verses to Mr 2:17, both which evangelists have also recorded this call of Levi; the first calls him *Matthew*; Mark and Luke call him *Levi*. There was nothing more ordinary amongst the Jews than for persons to have two names. Mark tells us his

father's name also, saying he was the son of Alphaeus. All agree in his employment, that he was a publican, one employed in the gathering of the public revenue, that part of it which arose from the exportation and importation of commodities; for he was sitting at the receipt of custom. Christ from thence calls him; he follows him, that is, gave up his name to be his disciple; in gratitude, Matthew, or Levi, invites him to a feast, and with him several other publicans and others. The other two evangelists say nothing of Matthew's preparing this feast; but it is implied in them, for they take notice of his sitting at meat in his house, and of the offence taken at it by the scribes and the Pharisees, and of our Saviour's taking notice of it, and what he said in justification of himself: see the notes before mentioned above. Only Matthew adds, that our Lord also said unto them, *Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.* But for the explication of our Saviour's entire answer, See Poole on "Mt 9:9", and following verses to Mt 9:13.

Luke 5:33

Ver. 33-39. We have also both in Matthew and Mark met with this piece of history. See Poole on "Mt 9:14", and following verses to Mt 9:17; See Poole on "Mr 2:18", and following verses to Mr 2:22. Both Matthew and Mark say, that they were the disciples of John who came, and thus said to our Saviour. In our notes upon the two former evangelists, we have fully opened this piece of history. John the Baptist was of a more severe deportment than our Saviour thought fit to show himself; and complying more with the practices of the Pharisees (though in much more sincerity) in their exercises of discipline, the Pharisees did more easily get his disciples to join with them in this address to our Saviour; though probably John's disciples did it more out of infirmity, and the Pharisees out of malice, that they might have whereby to lessen Christ's reputation amongst the people: thus weak, though good, men are often drawn in by those who are more subtle and malicious to promote their designs.

Besides, we naturally desire to be the standard to all, and that others should take their measures from us, and possibly John's disciples might have a little of that envy for their master's sake, which we find them sick of, Joh 3:26. Our Lord, who might have told them that he was to be their exemplar, and not they his, dealeth more gently with them, and gives them sufficient reason why, as yet, he did not inure his disciples to those severer acts of religion:

1. Because this was all the rejoicing time they were like to have. He was now with them; when he should be gone from them, before which it would not be long, they should have time to mourn.
2. That they were but newly entered into his discipleship, and therefore not at first to be discouraged, that they might not have a temptation upon them to leave off as soon as they began. But see the notes more fully upon the same history in Matthew and Mark.

Luke 6:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 6:1-5 Christ alleges Scripture in defence of his disciples plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath day.

Lu 6:6-11 He appeals to reason, and healeth the withered hand on the sabbath.

Lu 6:12-16 He spendeth the night in prayer, and chooseth the twelve apostles.

Lu 6:17-19 He healeth divers diseased,

Lu 6:20-26 pronounces blessings and woes,

Lu 6:27-45 teacheth to return good for evil, and other lessons of moral duty,

Lu 6:46-49 and admonishes to be his disciples in practice, and not in profession only.

Ver. 1-5. See Poole on "Mt 12:1", and following verses to Mt 12:8, and See Poole on "Mr 2:23", and following verses to Mr 2:28. There are several guesses what day is here meant, by *the second sabbath after the first*. The Jews had several sabbaths; besides the seventh day sabbath, which was weekly, all their festival days were called sabbaths. On the fourteenth day of the first month, at evening, began the passover; on the fifteenth day began their feast of unleavened bread, which held seven days, every one of which was called a sabbath; but the first day and the seventh day were to be days of holy convocation, in which no work was to be done that was servile, Le 23:7. Then they had their feast of first fruits. Fifty days after that they had their feast of pentecost. Some understand by *the second sabbath after the first*, the seventh day of the feast of unleavened bread. Others, their second great festival. It is very hard to resolve, and not material for us to know. For the history itself: See Poole on "Mt 12:1", and following verses to Mt 12:8.

Luke 6:6

Ver. 6-11. See Poole on "Mt 12:10", and following verses to Mt 12:13, See Poole on "Mr 3:1", and following verses to Mr 3:5. In both which places we met with the same history, and with some more circumstances. Mark tells us that the subject of their deliberation, what they might do to Jesus, was, *how they might destroy him*; this the evangelist maketh the effect of their madness, $\alpha\nu\omicron\iota\alpha\varsigma$, and he very properly so calls it. For men to answer arguments and reason with violence, is for them to act like mad men, not like reasonable creatures; yet, to show the degeneracy of human nature, we shall observe there is nothing hath been more ordinary, when men have been conquered by reasoning, and have nothing reasonably to oppose, than to fly to violence, and with swords to cut knots which they cannot untie. Nor can there be a greater evidence of silly and brutish souls, and a baffled cause.

Luke 6:12

Ver. 12. Those who straining this text would interpret the words, εν τη προσευχη, for, the place of prayer, will be concerned to find us out that house of prayer which stood in this mountain, or to tell us where we shall find in holy writ any place but the temple so called, and why it should be said that *he went out into a mountain to pray*, if it were not to signify unto us, that he sought a privacy and retiredness, which he could not have had in the temple, nor in any other common place for prayer. Those interpreters certainly judge righter that say, that our Saviour, being about to send put his twelve apostles, thought so great a work should not be done without solemn prayers; he therefore seeketh a place of privacy, and goeth thither to spend some more time than ordinary in the duty of prayer, and the evangelist saith that he *continued all night*; so setting us an example what to do in great affairs, especially such as are the sending out of persons to so great an employment as that of the ministry, and by his own example commending to us what Paul afterwards commanded, Eph 6:18 Col 4:2, *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.*

Luke 6:13

Ver. 13-16. We have twice already met with these names of the twelve disciples, whom our Saviour called apostles, intending them not only to be with him, and to have a more special communion with him, but also to be sent out with power to preach, baptize, and to work miracles: See Poole on "Mt 10:2". See Poole on "Mt 10:3". See Poole on "Mt 10:4". See Poole on "Mr 3:14", and following verses to Mr 3:19. There were amongst them two whose names were Simon: the one Christ named *Peter*; the other is called *Simon Zelotes* here; *Simon the Canaanite*, by Matthew and Mark. Two whose names were *James*: the one was *the son of Zebedee*, the other was *the son of Alphaeus*. Two whose names were *Judas*: the one is called *Thaddaeus* by Mark; *Lebbaeus* and *Thaddaeus*, by Matthew; *Judas the brother of James*, by Luke; (this was the penman of the Epistle of Jude);

and *Judas Iscariot, the traitor*. The other six were all of differing names. What occurs of difficulty as to their names: See Poole on "Mt 10:2", and following verses to Mt 10:4. See Poole on "Mr 3:14", and following verses to Mr 3:19.

Luke 6:17

Ver. 17-19. Such passages as these we meet with several times in the evangelists, who not writing a particular account of the several miracles wrought, or discourses made, by our Saviour, oftentimes they give us a general account of more than they particularly mention. Some think that Luke refers here to Mr 3:7,8; but Mark seemeth rather to refer to a multitude that followed him before he went up to the mountain, which yet might be the same people coming again the next morning, and waiting for Christ's coming down from the mountain.

Luke 6:20

Ver. 20-23. There are many that think that what Luke hath in these verses, and so to the end of this chapter, is but a shorter epitome of what Matthew hath in his 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters, and that both Matthew and Luke mean the same sermon preached at the same time. The things which favour this opinion are,

1. That sermon is said to be preached upon a mountain; this, when he came down and stood upon the plain, by which some understand only a plainer and more level part of the mountain.
2. That very many passages in the remaining part of this chapter are plainly the same with those we find in one of these three chapters in Matthew.

I can hardly be of that mind:

1. Because of the phrase here used, *he came down, and stood in the plain*: it seemeth to me hard to interpret that either of the top of the mountain, (which might be a plain), for how then could he be said to come down, or of a plainer place of the mountain.
2. The multitude described there are said to have come *from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond Jordan*. These are said to have come from *Judea, Jerusalem, and the seacoasts of Tyre and Sidon*. But:
3. Principally from the great difference in the relations of Matthew and Luke.
 - a) Many large discourses are not touched by Luke, viz. Christ's whole discourse in giving a true interpretation of the law, and his discourses, Mt 6:1-34, about alms, prayer, fasting.
 - b) Secondly, Luke here putteth in three verses together wherein there are woes denounced, of which Matthew saith nothing.

Now though it be usual with the evangelists to relate the same discourses and miracles with some different circumstances, yet not with such considerable differences and variations. Matthew records nine blessednesses pronounced by Christ; Luke but four, and those with considerable variation from Matthew. As for those things which incline some to think it the same sermon, they do not seem to me conclusive. For what they say as to the place, it rather proves the contrary. Matthew saith it was when he had gone up into a mountain, and sat down; Luke saith, he was come down, and stood in the plain. Nor is it more considerable, that most of the passages in this chapter are to be found in the 5th, 6th, or 7th chapter of Matthew; for as they are not here exactly repeated according as Matthew recites them, so what should hinder but that our Saviour at another time, and to another auditory, might preach the same things which concern all men? Leaving therefore all to their own judgments, I see no reason to think that this discourse was but a shorter copy of the same discourse, referring to the same time and company. This being premised, let us now come to consider the words themselves, comparing them with

the words recited by Matthew.

Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Matthew saith, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. It is true, neither riches nor poverty bless or curse any man, and none that are poor are blessed if they be proud and high minded, nor any rich man cursed but he that places his portion or consolation in riches; yet Christ here, by the antithesis, seems more particularly to direct his discourse to relieve his disciples discouraged by their poor and low estate in the world, by telling them that, whatever the world thought, they, being his disciples, believing in him, and following him, were in a better condition than those that were rich, and had their consolation in this life.

Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. Matthew saith, Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. The sense is much the same: You that are in a sad, afflicted state (being my disciples) are blessed; for there will come a time when God shall wipe tears from your eyes.

Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Matthew saith, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. It is true, hungering and thirsting are no blessings, but neither are they curses to a truly righteous soul, or a soul that truly seeketh after and studieth righteousness.

Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Matthew saith,

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. It is true the general sense is the same, sufferers for the name of Christ are pronounced blessed; but the words are very different, and here are some species of persecution mentioned that Matthew mentions not particularly.

1. Separating the disciples.
2. Casting out their names as evil.

The separating here mentioned may indeed be understood of imprisonment, or banishment, for persons under those circumstances are separated from the company of their relations and countrymen; but it may also be understood of ecclesiastical censures; and thus it agreeth both with our Saviour's prophecy, Joh 16:2, *They shall put you out of the synagogues*, and with Joh 9:22, where we read of a decree they made, *that if any man did confess that Jesus was the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue*. There are some who think that the Jews exercised no such power till the time of Ezra, when their governor was but a substitute under a pagan prince, who did not give their conquered subjects a power to put any to death, but left them to exercise any lighter punishments. I cannot subscribe to the judgment of those learned men that think so. For as it is not reasonable, that God left the church of the Jews without that power that nature clothes every society with, to purge out of itself such as are not fit members for it; so it will not enter into my thoughts, that all were to be put to death, of whom God said so often, he, or they, shall be cut off from his, or their, people, as in case of uncircumcision, and not receiving the passover in its time. So as I do not think that the latter Jews derived this practice from a human constitution, but from a Divine law. Now we are told that the Jews had three degrees of this separation: some they merely separated from their communion; others they anathematized, that is, cursed; others they so separated, that they prayed against them, that God would make them examples of his vengeance; and some think (but I judge it but a guess) that these were those sinners unto death, for whom John would not have Christians pray, 1Jo 5:16. Now it is certain that the Jews exercised not the lowest degree only, but the highest, against Christians, and also made it their business by letters, and word of mouth, to reproach them all over the world, Ac 28:22. Now Christ pronounces them, under these circumstances, blessed, if they suffered these things for his name's sake. This casting out of their names as evil, doth not only signify the blotting out their names out of the rolls of the church, but the defaming of them in the manner before mentioned, which was like to be a sore temptation to the disciples; against which he further arms them, saying, *Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets*. See Poole on "Mt 5:12".

Luke 6:24

Ver. 24. Not because you are rich, but because you are not rich towards God, because you look upon your riches as your portion, as your consolation; or, you that are rich in the opinion of your own righteousness.

Luke 6:25

Ver. 25. Our Saviour must be understood, either of those who are sinfully full, or at least such as are spiritually empty; those that are full are opposed to those that hunger. If we take *hunger* for a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, as Matthew speaks, those that are full are such as are filled with wind, a high opinion of their own righteousness. If we take *hunger* for a want of the necessaries of this life, then fullness signifieth either a sinfulness with drink, or meat, or ill gotten goods, or at least for such as are spiritually empty of the knowledge or grace of God; there will come a time when they shall want, as rich Dives wanted a little water to cool his tongue. So by those *that laugh* must be understood, either those that are sinfully merry, or at least those that have no true cause of spiritual joy. By mourning and weeping, threatened to such, is either meant the vengeance of God upon them in this life, or in the world to come, where there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

Luke 6:26

Ver. 26. A good report of all, even those that are without, is a desirable thing, and what all good men ought to labour for, both by avoiding any just occasion of their speaking ill of them, and by doing all the acts of kindness and charity that may commend religion to them. But the world is so corrupt, that usually none are worse spoken of than the best men. And this is true of no sort of men more than of the ministers of the gospel; neither the prophets of old, nor John the Baptist, nor Christ, nor the apostles, could have good words from the wicked party of their several ages. The false prophets of old were in much greater credit with the generality of the Jews

than the prophets of the Lord. The doctrines of the law and the gospel are so contrary to the most of men's lusts, as it is impossible that the most of the world should be reconciled to them, or to those who faithfully declare them: this the Pharisees in their age, and the papists and their friends in our age, have for some time so well understood, that as it was the business of the Pharisees in their time, so it hath been the business of the popish casuists, so to expound the law of God, as men may flatter themselves that they are no debtors to it, though they keep their several lusts; and so to interpret the gospel, that the way to heaven is made so broad that it is not easy for any to miss it.

Luke 6:27

Ver. 27-29. We met also with a passage much like this in this verse, Mt 5:39,40, the general sense of which was, as I then said, a prohibition of private revenge. It is therefore there prefaced in with a more general precept, *Resist not evil*. But besides this, there seems to be in it also a prohibition of vexatious suits and molestations of others, though under a colour of law; therefore Matthew saith, *If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy cloak;* and it may be thought a more special precept relating to those times, when they had none but heathen magistrates, and in some measure to be expounded by 1Co 6:7, and to be a precept given with respect to the reputation of the gospel, that it might not be scandalized by Christians going to law before infidels. It is most certain it doth not forbid the use of the law, whether for the defending or recovering our just rights, only the irregular or scandalous use of it. See Poole on "Mt 5:39".

Luke 6:30

Ver. 30. Matthew hath much the same passage, only he saith, *Give to him that, &c., not to every man that asketh of thee;* and for the latter clause, he hath, *from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away*, which seems more agreeing to the precept. De 15:8. These precepts of our Saviour must be interpreted, not according to the strict sense of the words, as if every man were by them obliged, without regard to his own abilities, or the

circumstances of the persons begging or asking of him, to give to every one that hath the confidence to ask of him; but as obliging us to liberality and charity according to our abilities, and the true needs and circumstances of our poor brethren, and in that order which God's word hath directed us; first providing for our own families, then doing good to the household of faith, then also to others, as we are able, and see any of them true objects of our charity. Nor must the second part of the verse be interpreted, as if it were a restraint of Christians from pursuing of thieves or oppressors, but as a precept prohibiting us private revenge, or too great contending for little things, &c. See Poole on "Mt 5:42".

Luke 6:31

Ver. 31. See Poole on "Mt 7:12". This is the law of nature the golden rule of all justice, and may also serve for a guide to us to expound the former verses, and some other precepts of charity in this chapter. Men in all these cases should consider what they would be glad, and think reasonable, that others should do to them, were they in their circumstances, and the others had the same ability or advantage to do good to them; and by this they should measure their acts both of justice and charity.

Luke 6:32

Ver. 32-34. See Poole on "Mt 5:46". See Poole on "Mt 5:47". The strength of our Saviour's argument lieth in this, That God expects that those who have received more grace and favour from God than others, and who make a higher profession than others, should do more in obedience to the positive commands of God, and the revelations of his will in his word, than they who live merely by the light of nature, and live up merely to the law of nature.

Luke 6:35

Ver. 35,36. I know not how to agree, what I find many interpreters

judging, that this text is a prohibition of usury. I should rather interpret it more largely, as a command for acts of mercy, with respect to the circumstances of persons, obliging us not to withhold a charitable hand, from our fear that if we lend we shall lose what we lend, and obliging us, that if we find the circumstances of any that desireth us to lend him for his necessity such a quantity of money or goods as we can spare, and we can well enough bear the loss of, if the providence of God should render the person unable to repay us, we should not be awed by such a fear from acts of charity, but give with a resolution to lose it, if God please to disable the person to whom we lend, so as he cannot repay us. For the question about usury, as to which some conceive this text a prohibition, this is not a place to handle it in the latitude. I do not think it was ever absolutely forbidden to the Jews, they might take it of strangers, and that not only of the Canaanites, whom some say they might kill, (which I doubt after their agreement to a quiet cohabitation), but of other strangers also who came not under the denomination of Canaanites. That argued the taking of usury to be not *malum per se*, in itself evil, but only *malum prohibitum*, an evil as forbidden; and not absolutely and universally forbidden, but respectively, only with reference to their brethren of the same church and nation; so rather to be reckoned amongst the municipal laws of the Jews, than the common laws of God for all mankind. Besides that amongst the Jews there was less need of it, partly in respect of their years of jubilee, and partly in regard their employments were chiefly in husbandry, and about cattle, which called not for such sums of money as merchandising doth. Nor is it to be referred to any of the ten commandments, unless the eighth, *Thou shalt not steal*; which forbidding sins against charity, and such sins against charity being there forbidden as are the taking away the goods of another against his will, and without a just cause, I cannot see how the lending of money for a moderate use, when it is helpful and relieving to our neighbour, should be any kind of stealing, when his good will appeareth in the contract; nor can there be any injustice in it, where there is a *quid pro quo*, but a proportion for what I am endamaged by the loan; unless any will say it is unjust because against the law of God, which is to beg the question, this argument being brought to prove it is not contrary to the law of God. The exacting of all undue proportion for usury, or a moderate proportion, when we plainly see our brother is fallen into poverty, and cannot pay it, may be forbidden, as a sin against charity, and that love that we ought to show to our neighbours, and the mercifulness here required, Lu 6:36. Yet, admitting the law of God, De 23:19,20, to be

interpreted of all usury, (which yet seemeth hard, for then the Jews might not sell for any thing more at twelve months' time, than if they were paid presently, for the words are *usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing lent upon usury*), it concerned the Jews only between themselves, not in their dealings with any strangers, which is plain, Lu 6:20; so also Ex 22:25, where the term *poor* is also put in, as it is Le 25:35-37; by which texts the psalmist must be expounded, Ps 15:5. It may possibly from the equity of that law oblige us to be more kind to those that are of the same nation and church with us, than unto others, especially such as are no Christians; and amongst those that are Christians, to those that are poor, than to those who have better estates. But, as I said in the beginning, I had rather interpret the precept of the text more largely, as a general precept of mercy, from the example of our heavenly Father.

Luke 6:37

Ver. 37. See Poole on "Mt 7:1", See Poole on "Mt 6:14", where we have discoursed what private judgings are here forbidden, and what forgiving is here required.

Luke 6:38

Ver. 38. To let us know how God favoureth acts of charity and justice we shall observe, that there are no good deeds that God so rewardeth by retaliation, as such which are the products of these habits; nor any sins which God so punishes by way of retaliation, as sins contrary to these, especially such as are more eminently contrary. This verse speaks of acts of charity.

Give, and it shall be given unto you, and that not bare measure, but good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. Nothing can more concur to make good measure, than the shaking of the bushel, the crowding and pressing down of the corn or meal with the hand, and the pouring in till the measure runneth over. So as that which is here promised, is a plentiful reward to charitable and merciful actions, either from the hand of God more mediately, God stirring up others to be as kind to us as

we are to others; or more immediately, himself blessing us by his unexpected providential dispensations: to this purpose are abundance of scriptures, De 24:19 Ps 41:1-3 Pr 11:25 28:27 2Co 9:6. If men will not be so just as to requite the good which their brethren have done them, having it in their power, yet God will be faithful to his promises, and by his providence take care that those who have done acts of mercy, not in a mere commiseration to human condition, but in a just obedience to his will, shall not lose by what they have done; they shall be rewarded fully and plentifully, finding again (though it may be after many days) the bread which they have cast upon the waters, according to his command.

Luke 6:39

Ver. 39. By a *parable* here is to be understood a proverbial saying, which hath some darkness in it, as being brought to express or signify more than the words naturally do express. Proverbial speeches are applicable to more things, and in more cases, than one. Nor is it to be expected, that in all that the evangelists give us an account of, as to the sayings of Christ, we should be able to find out an evident connexion. They, questionless, wrote much at least from their memories, and set down many sayings without respect to the time when our Saviour spake them, or the matter of his discourse immediately preceding them. We need not therefore be careful to make out the connexion of these words of his with what was before set down. In the parallel text, Mt 15:14, our Saviour plainly applies these words with reference to the scribes and Pharisees, the Jewish leaders, their doctors and teachers at that time, who themselves being ignorant of the true sense of the Divine law, were not like very well to guide others, but with them to *fall into the ditch*, that is, into ruin and destruction: from whence a very probable connexion of them here with what went before may be observed; for, as appears from Mt 5:1-48, he had in the preceding verses given an interpretation of that law of God, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, much different from what the Pharisees had given of it, who had expounded it, Mt 5:43, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy*; making a great many branches of love to men more than they made. Now, (saith he), this is the will, this is the law, of my heavenly Father. The scribes and Pharisees, your present doctors and teachers, go much below this; but listen not to them, if you mind to please God; themselves are blind, and know not the will of God, and if you follow

them what can you expect more than such an event as where one blind man leads another?

Luke 6:40

Ver. 40. This was another common saying, which our Saviour applies, Mt 10:24 Joh 15:20, to comfort his disciples concerning their sufferings, because he was first in suffering: here he applies it to signify their duty in doing. Some apply this with reference to the Pharisees, and so make a connexion between this and the former verse, where he had said, If the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch; for *the disciple is not above his master*, none must look to learn of another more than the teacher knoweth himself. But it is better applied to Christ, and is as much as if our Lord had said, I am your Master, you are my disciples, and by that relation engaged to learn of me, and to follow me. I have taught you no more than I am ready to practise; I am merciful, I forgive, I give, looking for nothing again. I do not look that you should do any thing above me, any thing as to which I have not set you, or shall not set you, an example; but your perfection lieth in coming as near to me as you can, in being as your Master.

Luke 6:41

Ver. 41,42. See Poole on "Mt 7:3", and following verses to Mt 7:5.

Luke 6:43

Ver. 43-45. See Poole on "Mt 7:16", and following verses to Mt 7:20. Lu 6:43 and Lu 6:44 are expounded in Lu 6:45. Men and women here (as in other texts of Scripture) are compared to trees, with respect to their root and fruit, and the dependence the fruit hath upon the root and the nature of the tree. The heart of man is made the root, that being the principle of human actions, as the root is the principle to the fruit; for all the overt actions of a man's life are but the imperate acts of the heart and of the will. Hence it is that a will renewed and sanctified in a man, and made

conformable to the will of God, doth not only will and choose the will of God, love it, desire it, and delight in it; but commandeth the tongue to direct its discourses conformable to it, and also commandeth all the members of the body, in their motions and order, to act conformably: and on the contrary, the unrenewed and unsanctified will of man doth not only reject and refuse the will of God, but directeth the tongue to words contrary to the Divine will, and all the members of the body, in their motions and order, to act without any respect to or awe of the will of God.

Luke 6:46

Ver. 46-49. See Poole on "Mt 7:24" and following verses to Mt 7:27, where we before met with the same thing. The sum is, men's hopes of salvation built upon any other but Christ alone, or built upon Christ without a sincere study and endeavour to keep the commandments of Christ, are vain hopes; and though, till a storm of affliction or temptation comes, they may please themselves a little with them, yet when they come to die, or when any notable temptation assaults them, or any great affliction cometh upon them, then they will fail them, and they will see the folly and vanity of them. *What is the hope of the hypocrite, when God taketh away his soul?* Job 27:8.

Luke 7:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 7:1-10 Christ admires the centurion's singular faith, and healeth his absent servant.

Lu 7:11-17 He raiseth to life the widow's son at Nain, Lu 7:18-23 and sendeth back the messengers of John with an account of the miracles they had seen wrought by him.

Lu 7:24-30 His testimony of John.

Lu 7:31-35 He reproveth the perverseness of the people, who were not to be won either by the manners of John or himself.

Lu 7:36-50 He suffereth his feet to be washed and anointed by a woman who had been a sinner; and in a parable showeth that even the worst of sinners may be forgiven upon the terms of a hearty and sincere repentance.

Ver. 1-10. See Poole on "Mt 8:5", and following verses to Mt 8:13, where we have considered all the differences between Matthew's and Luke's relation of this miracle. We have in it remarkable,

1. The humanity of the centurion to his servant, to teach us Christians to do the like.
2. The profitableness of good works: the centurion's love to the Jews in building them a synagogue gains their applications to Christ for him.
3. The humility of the centurion: he did not think himself worthy to appear in Christ's presence, nor to receive Christ into his house.
4. His faith in Christ's Divine power and goodness. It doth not appear that he believed that Christ was the eternal Son of God, but he did at least believe that he was clothed with a Divine power, or had a Divine power communicated to him from God, by which he was able, at a distance, and by no more than a word, without application of human rational means, to command off the distemper of his servant.
5. The power of faith in God, and its acceptableness to him. Christ doth not only effect the cure, but predicate his faith to be greater than he had found amongst the generality of the Jewish nation, who went for the only people of God at that day, and had much more light, and means to discern that Christ was sent of God for the good of men, than this Roman captain had.

Luke 7:11

Ver. 11-15. Luke alone gives us an account of this miracle of our Saviour's. Matthew mentions only the raising from the dead of Jairus's daughter. Luke adds this. John adds that of Lazarus, Joh 11:57, by which our Lord did mightily show his Divine power, and gave us some firstfruits of the more general resurrection, as well as declared himself to be, as he elsewhere saith, the resurrection and the life. The place where this miracle was done was called *Nain*. H. Stephen Heb., Chald., Gr. et Lat. *nomina*, &c., tells us, it was a city or town about two miles from Mount Tabor, at the foot of the lesser Mount Hermon, near to Hendor. It was the custom of the Jews to bury their dead without their cities. Christ met this dead body carrying out. He was it seems her only child, and she was a widow, so under a great affliction, God by this providence having quenched the only coal she had left in Israel.

And when the Lord saw her, (the text saith), he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. None moved him on the behalf of the widow, neither do we read that she herself spake to him; only our Saviour's bowels were moved at the sight of her sorrow, and consideration of her loss. It is observable that our Saviour wrought his healing miracles:

1. Sometimes at the motion and desire of the parties to be healed.
2. Sometimes at the desires of others on their behalf.
3. Sometimes of his own free motion, neither themselves nor others soliciting him for any such act of mercy toward them;

and that in the three first miracles, (of which Matthew and Luke give us an account here and Mt 8:1-34), which he wrought after his famous sermon on the mount, he gave us an instance of all these, in his healing of the leper

personally beseeching him, of the centurion's servant at the entreaty of the elders of the Jews, and of the widow's son here, upon his sight of the woman's affliction, none soliciting him. Thereby showing us that we ought not to stay our hand from doing good when we have proper objects and opportunities before us, until we be importuned and solicited there unto. Christ saying to her, *Weep not*, forbade not the natural expression of her passion, but signified a sudden and not expected resurrection, so as she should not weep without hope. This said, he cometh and toucheth the bier, or the coffin, and saith not, Young man, in the name of God, I say unto thee, Arise; but, *Young man, I say unto thee, Arise*; thereby declaring to them (would they have understood it) that he was the Son of God, and while he was on earth had a power in and from himself by the word of his mouth to command the dead to arise. His word was effective, and to evidence it, it is said, that *he that was dead sat up*, so as all might take notice of the miracle, *and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother*; to let him know his duty to be subject to her, and the jurisdiction she had over him.

Luke 7:16

Ver. 16,17. The people here saw the Divine power manifestly exerted; for the keys of the clouds, the womb, and the grave, are three keys, which their teachers had taught them were kept in God's hand alone. All sense of the Divine presence naturally fills us with fear. Some, even the worst of men, are filled with a stupid fear of astonishment and amazement. Pious persons, or those that are inclined to piety, are filled with a fear of reverence; such a fear we read of, Lu 1:65. Such was this; for it issued in a predication of the name of God, and a giving to him praise and glory; for that a great Prophet was risen amongst them. Thus far God blessed this miracle, to make them look upon Christ as a Prophet, a great Prophet; and to look upon God's act in his sending him as an act of great kindness to the Jews, for that is here plainly understood by them, saying, *God hath visited his people*, as before, Lu 1:68; and this rumour was spread abroad throughout all that country.

Luke 7:18

Ver. 18-23. See Poole on "Mt 11:2", and following verses to Mt 11:6.

Luke 7:24

Ver. 24-28. See Poole on "Mt 11:7", and following verses to Mt 11:15, where we met with this testimony concerning John, given by our Saviour, with some considerable enlargements.

Luke 7:29

Ver. 29,30. Matthew hath not this addition to our Saviour's commendation of John, but it is of great use to introduce our Saviour's following discourse. The evangelist here divideth the hearers into two sorts.

The first were the common people and the publicans; the former were despised by the Jewish doctors and rabbis, as a rude, illiterate sort of people; the latter, as a notoriously wicked sort.

The second sort were the Pharisees and the lawyers; of the former, he saith, that they, *being baptized with the baptism of John, justified God*, that is, they owned, and publicly declared, and predicated the goodness and justice of God; they approved of what God had done, and blessed his name for sending amongst them such a prophet as John was, they owned

and received him, and were baptized by him. Whoso believeth the message which God sendeth, and obeyeth it, he justifieth God; he that doth not, accuses and condemneth God: see Joh 3:33 1Jo 5:10.

But the Pharisees and lawyers, that is, the scribes; not the scribes of the people, (they were but actuaries, or public notaries), but the scribes of the law, whose office it was to interpret and give the sense of the law.

These *rejected*; — the word sometimes signifies to despise, Lu 10:16 1Th 4:8 Heb 10:28; sometimes to disannul, as Ga 3:15; sometimes to reject, as Mr 6:26 7:9. It is here interpreted by those words, *being not baptized of him*. We must understand the sense of $\eta\theta\epsilon\tau\eta\sigma\alpha\nu$ by considering what is here meant by $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\eta\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \Theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$, *the counsel of God*, which some will understand concerning the purpose of God within himself; others, concerning his revealed will, his counsel as revealed to us. The matter seemeth to me but a strife about a word, which is sometimes taken in one sense, sometimes in another. The will of God is but one, only as every one of us keep some part of our mind to ourselves, and reveal other parts of it to our servants and children; so God, who hath determined and willed all events, concealeth some part of it from his creatures, and revealeth another part of it to them. It is the will of God that this, and that, and the other person should believe and be saved. He revealeth as to this thus much of his will, that whose believers shall be saved; but for that other part of his will, that this, and that, or the other man shall believe, this he concealeth, till he gives them a power to believe, and to receive the gospel, and then his will in this particular is revealed. Supposing then we here understand by $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\eta\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$, God's secret purpose to be understood, how is it proved that it must be understood of his secret purpose for their salvation? Why should it not be understood of the secret purpose and counsel of God to give them the means of life and salvation? God from all eternity purposed to give the Jews the ministry of John the Baptist and Christ, as means for their salvation, not which should be certainly effective of it, but that should have such a tendency towards it as without their own refusing, and opposing them, it should have been effective, and was in their own nature a proper means in order to it: they reject and refuse it; by this they rejected the counsel of God, the effect of his counsel, and so judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, by neglecting, despising, and rejecting the use of that means, which was the product of an eternal purpose to send them such means.

This counsel of God is said to be *rejected* towards or *against themselves*: take it as God's act, it was towards themselves, that is, for their good; if we refer it to their act of rejection, or refusal, it was against themselves, a judging of themselves unworthy of eternal life. We cannot in this place translate it disannul, or frustrate, as Ga 3:15, understanding it as to the Divine act; for who can frustrate or disannul the will or purpose of man, as to an act of his own, within his power to purpose? Though indeed as to the event it may be disannulled, as to any good effect as to another, if it be made to depend upon the action of another.

Besides, what need any further explication of this phrase, of rejecting the counsel of God against themselves, than what followeth, *being not baptized of him*, that is, not receiving John's doctrine of repentance for the remission of sins, and bringing forth fruits worthy of amendment of life, nor submitting to baptism as a testimony of such repentance; for the baptism of John in Scripture signifieth his whole administration, the doctrine he preached, as well as the ordinance of baptism by him administered; and so must be interpreted where our Saviour asked the Pharisees whether John's baptism was from earth or from heaven, and they durst not say from heaven, lest Christ should have asked them, why then they believed him not? They were not baptized of him, is the same thing with, They would be none of his disciples.

Luke 7:31

Ver. 31-35. See Poole on "Mt 11:16" and following verses to Mt 11:19, where we have this smart reflection upon the scribes and Pharisees, and the generality of the Jews. They were neither pleased full nor fasting, but censorious of the different manner of living of John and Christ. John showed a more austere and severe humour, and lived like a recluse: you had nothing else to say; you said he had a devil. I have chosen not a less innocent, but a more free converse with men of all sorts, and eat and drink as other men; of me you say that I am a wine bibber, a glutton, a friend of publicans and sinners. Such was their perverseness, that proceeded from their enmity to the doctrine of John and Christ.

Luke 7:36

Ver. 36. This was no small civility from a Pharisee, for the Pharisees were of all others, in the generality of them, the most desperate and implacable enemies of our Saviour. But God hath his number amongst all nations, and all sorts and orders of men. Our Saviour, as was said before, was of a free and open converse, and never refused any opportunity offered him to do good. We may soberly eat and drink with sinners pursuing such designs.

Luke 7:37

Ver. 37,38. What hath made any interpreters imagine this was the some story which is mentioned Mt 26:6-13 Mr 14:3-9, and Joh 12:1-3, I cannot tell. The histories agree scarcely in any thing, unless in the bringing the alabaster box of ointment, and the anointing our Saviour's feet, whereas there was nothing in those countries more ordinary. That anointing was done in Bethany, within two miles of Jerusalem, this in Galilee. That in the house of one Simon the leper this in the house of one Simon a Pharisee. That a little, this a great while, before our Saviour's passion. At that Judas was offended, at this Simon the Pharisee was offended. There Christ vindicates the woman from one head of argument, here from another. Questionless this is another quite different piece of history.

And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner; that is, a remarkable sinner; it is a word generally so used, and, applied to women, signifies a prostitute, or at least one of an ill report as to chastity.

Was, refers here to the time past, though lately past; she had lately been infamous and notorious, but it appeareth by what followeth that she was not so now, otherwise than in the opinion and vogue of the people; according to whose opinion, though uncharitable enough, *Quae semel fuit mala, semper praesumitur esse mala in eodem genere mali*, A person who hath once been bad is always presumed so to be, through their ignorance of

the power of Divine grace in changing the heart, or their malice against and envy towards those whose hearts they see so changed. But whatever this woman had been, it seems God had affected her heart with the word which Christ had preached, and filled it with the pure love of God and Christ, instead of its former fullness of impure love, and made her sins as bitter as they had been formerly pleasant to her.

She hearing Christ was eating meat at the house of Simon the Pharisee, makes no noise, but cometh *behind him*, bringing *an alabaster box of ointment*, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with her tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Weeping in the sense of her sins, and so plentifully as she washed the feet of Christ with her tears, spoke a broken and a contrite heart. Wiping them with her hair; her hair, with which she had offended through wantonness, plaiting it, and adorning herself by the dress of it to allure her lovers, she now useth to testify her abhorrence of her former courses.

And kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. The kiss is a symbol of love, and not of love only, but of subjection and worship; by this she both showed her love to Christ, and also her subjection to him, she kissed Christ in the psalmist's sense, Ps 2:12. It was not a kiss of love only, but of reverence and subjection, like Joseph's kiss to Jacob, Ge 50:1, Moses's kiss to Jethro, Ex 18:7; nay, of the highest reverence, for such was the kiss of the feet. And to testify her adoration of him: thus the idolaters kissed the calves, Ho 13:2, and Baal. 1Ki 19:18. Washing and anointing with oil, was a common compliment they used in those countries for cleansing and cooling the feet. She had been a great sinner, she now shows the profoundest sorrow, greatest love, humility, subjection, &c. But some may say, How could she come behind him, sitting at meat, and do this? While we sit at meat our feet are before us. This confirmeth the notion I mentioned before, in my notes on Mt 26:20, concerning the Jewish manner of sitting at meat, which was kneeling and resting their bodies upon their legs leaning backwards: admitting that, all that we here read of this woman was very easy; for his legs being thrust out backward, the soles of his feet were turned up, and she might with convenience enough come at them behind him to wash, and to wipe, and to anoint them, which it is hard to conceive how she could do, admitting him to have sat as we do, putting our feet forward under the table.

Luke 7:39

Ver. 39. How easily are persons (though seemingly well inclined and fair) offended, who have not the love of God rooted and grounded in their hearts! Did then all men who were prophets know persons at first sight?

1. It is certain they knew no more of people's hearts and lives than God was pleased to reveal to them, or they knew by converse with them, and observation of them.
2. Suppose she had been a sinner, might she not be a convert now? And did not her behaviour toward Christ (before mentioned) witness a change in her?
3. Admit she had been yet such a sinner, yet might not she touch Christ?

This was indeed a Pharisaical error, that all not of their own religion, and all persons notorious for some sins, were in the same order as lepers, and other persons that were Levitically or legally unclean, so as none might touch them, but that contact made them also unclean. It is said also of the Samaritans, that when they met a Jew, or a Christian, they would first call out to him, Do not touch me. That there was of old such a party amongst the Jews that cried, *Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou,* is plain from Isa 65:5.

Luke 7:40

Ver. 40-48. Our Saviour treats his host civilly, but yet letteth him know, that he both knew his heart, and the heart of this poor woman, whom he had so uncharitably reflected upon.

Simon spake within himself, Lu 7:39. Christ lets him know that he knew the thoughts of his heart.

I have (saith he) somewhat to say unto thee. So he civilly obtaineth leave

of him to speak.

Simon saith, Master, say on. Our Saviour tells him: *There was a certain creditor, &c.* It is obvious by our Saviour's application of this parable, Lu 7:44-47, that he whom Christ here intends under the notion of a creditor is God; that one of the debtors that did owe five hundred pence (that is, a great sum) was this woman: whether Simon were intended by the other, or no, is not easily determined; but admit the other was ο δεινα, any one that was a sinner, but not so notorious a sinner, God forgives freely both the one and the other. Christ asks which would love most. Simon tells him, that debtor to whom most was forgiven. Christ tells him that he had judged rightly. Whence observe:

1. That as all sins, so all sinners, are not equal in the sight of God; all are guilty, but there are degrees in guilt.
2. That be men's sins less or greater, fewer or more, those who have least will stand in need of pardoning mercy and forgiveness.
3. That God is free in the forgiveness of all sins, be they few or more; *he frankly forgave them both.*
4. That Christ first speaketh of these two debtors as being forgiven, then of their loving much, and of their being forgiven as the cause of their loving much.
5. That much love will follow a great forgiveness; a great sinner (one, I mean, who hath been so) will hardly ever be able to satisfy himself that his much is forgiven, if he doth not find his heart very warm with love to God.
6. A true love to God and Christ will be seen in all acts, which may be demonstrative or declarative of it. Christ turns to the woman, and saith to Simon, &c. Kissing, washing of feet, anointing with oil, were usual compliments of those countries, by which men showed their respects and kindness to strangers and friends.

For washing of feet, see Ge 18:4 19:2 Jud 19:21 1Sa 25:41 1Ti 5:10. For anointing with oil, see Ps 23:5 45:7. This woman had exceeded the usual

kindness and civility of the country toward Christ: they were wont to bring their friends water to wash their feet, and possibly a piece of linen to wipe them; she washes his feet with her tears, and drieth them with her hair. They used to anoint the head of their friends with oil, she anoints his feet. They used to kiss one another's cheeks or lips, she kisses his feet. They kissed their friends once, she ceased not to kiss his feet. Upon this Christ, who before had forgiven her, declareth her to be forgiven, first in the hearing of Simon, then he doubles his words unto her. He had told Simon before that the creditor had frankly forgiven them both; his adding here, *Her sins, which are many*, sufficiently evidences that it was she whom he intended by the debtor who owed much. Hence we may judge how little ground the papists have to urge this place to prove, that remission of sins is procured by our own merits and satisfactions. Love here is not mentioned as the cause, but as the effect of the remission of sins; and that which our Saviour here designed to instruct Simon in, was,

1. That whatsoever this woman had been, she was not now such a notorious sinner as he fancied; her sins were forgiven.
2. That God having thus favoured her with the grace of remission, had also kindled in her heart a love towards him.
3. That this love wrought in her heart in some proportion to that love which God had magnified upon her, therefore she loved much.
4. That men and women's love to God and Christ, will and ought to be according to that love which they have received from Christ.
5. That much love to God will bring a great sense of God's love to the soul, Joh 14:21.

The particle $\sigma\tau\iota$, which we translate *because*, doth not always in Scripture signify the cause, but may be translated *therefore*, or, *for what cause*: see Joh 14:17, *Ye know him*; for he *dwelleth in you*: the Spirit's abiding in believers is not the cause of their knowing of him, but the effect of it, so that *for*, in that place, is as much as *therefore*. So in Mr 9:28, $\sigma\tau\iota$ is as much as *for what cause*, or, *for what reason*? We translate it, *Why could not we cast him out*? So here, *her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for which cause, or reason, she loveth much*.

Luke 7:49

Ver. 49. These were either the Pharisees, who thought that Christ blasphemed in arrogating to himself such a power as belonged to God alone; or the others, who speak this rather in admiration; but it is probable the former are here meant.

Luke 7:50

Ver. 50. Thy believing in me as he who have power on earth to forgive sins, and accordingly making application to me, and this thy faith working by love, Ga 5:6, producing in thee this hearty sorrow for thy sins, a subjection unto me, and such testifications of thy love as thou art able to make, hath been an instrumental cause of that salvation, which floweth from me as the principal cause, Ro 6:23. We have such another expression in Mt 9:22 Mr 5:34; though the saving here mentioned be much more excellent than that there spoken of. Faith is profitable both for the good things of this life, and those of the life which is to come; and with reference to both, salvation is ascribed to faith, as the instrumental cause, not to obedience and love, though the faith that doth us good must work by love, and be evidenced by a holy conversation.

Go in peace, is a phrase which was the usual valediction among the Jews, as much as our Farewell, or God be with you, they under the term of *peace* comprehending all good; but when we consider who it is that speaketh, and what immediately preceded, we have reason to think this was a more than ordinary compliment or farewell, even as much as is comprehended under the term *peace*, which, as I before said, is all good, but more

especially that peace mentioned by the apostle, Ro 5:1, as an effect of faith. Go thy way a blessed and happy woman, and in the view and sense of thy own blessedness, and be not troubled at the censures and reflections of supercilious persons, who may despise or overlook thee because thou hast been a great sinner. God hath pardoned thy sins, and this I assure thee of; only take heed to keep and maintain that peace.

Luke 8:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 8:1-3 Christ preacheth through the cities, attended by his disciples, and ministered unto by devout women of their substance.

Lu 8:4-8 The parable of the sower.

Lu 8:9,10 Why Christ taught in parables.

Lu 8:11-15 The parable expounded.

Lu 8:16-18 Light is given to be improved and communicated.

Lu 8:19-21 Christ showeth whom he regardeth as his nearest relations,

Lu 8:22-25 stilleth a tempest on the sea with his word,

Lu 8:26-40 casteth out the legion of devils, and suffereth them to enter into the herd of swine; is entreated by the Gadarcades to depart, and refuseth the attendance of him whom he had healed,

Lu 8:41,42 is besought by Jairus to go and heal his daughter.

Lu 8:43-48 By the way he healeth a woman of an inveterate issue of blood.

Lu 8:49-56 He raiseth Jairus's daughter to life.

Ver. 1-3. Still I cannot but observe, that preaching the gospel, and thereby showing the glad tidings of salvation, (the principal means to bring men to the kingdom of God, whether that in this life, or the kingdom of glory in the life which is to come), was Christ's great work. His working miracles was but subservient to this, and for the confirmation of the doctrine which he preached; hence, when a people showed a contempt of his word, he refused to work any miracles before them. How any one can dream, that either praying, or government, or administering sacraments, or any thing

else, should be more the work of a minister of Christ than preaching, may justly amaze any thinking soul that ever read the gospel.

Christ went every where about *preaching, and the twelve were with him*, sometimes hearing, (as his disciples), sometimes preaching; some *women* also were with him, such as *had been healed of evil spirits* and other diseases. Mary Magdalene was one, out of whom he had cast seven devils, that is, many devils. Most think she had her name from Magdala, a city in Galilee, where she was bred, or dwelt. It is a great error to think she was the Mary mentioned Joh 11:1-57, the sister of Lazarus; she lived in Bethany, near to Jerusalem. Yet it is plain from Mr 16:1-20 that she was at Jerusalem at the time of Christ's death and resurrection; but so were many that followed him from Galilee, Mr 15:41 Lu 23:49.

And Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. Christ hath his elect in all places, his Joseph in Pharaoh's court, his Daniel and three children in Nebuchadnezzar's court, his saints in Nero's household, Php 4:22, his Joanna in Herod's family. This was that Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, he who put John the Baptist to death, and himself with his soldiers mocked Christ; possibly his steward was as bad, but his wife was one that followed Christ, knowing that though her husband had power over her body, he had none over her soul.

And they *ministered to him of their substance*. They were not ashamed to be seen following of Christ, though doubtless they met with scoffs enough. Nor were they ashamed to be reproached for their former failing; nor was Christ, because of their former lives, or the life of some of them, to have them following him. It is a glory to Christ, and to the church of Christ, to have great sinners brought to him, and brought into it; the only shame is to such as, being in the church, or pretending at least to be Christians, are debauchees still. Christ did not give himself for a people that were pure and holy, without spot or wrinkle, but *that he might sanctify them and cleanse them, with the washing of water by the word*, Eph 5:25-27. Following Christ *they ministered to him*. This was according to Christ's doctrine, Mt 10:10, and his apostles after him, 1Co 9:11 2Co 8:9 Ga 6:6. Some of them might be virgins, some widows, some wives, who had an allowance for themselves from their husbands; however, it could be no robbery to give of what was their husbands' to him who was the Lord of all, which either their husbands or they possessed. Nor was Christ ashamed

to live upon the baskets of others, while he was providing spiritual food for the souls of all, 2Co 8:9.

Luke 8:4

Ver. 4-15. We have had this parable, See Poole on "Mt 13:1", See Poole on "Mr 4:1". See the notes on both these chapters.

Luke 8:16

Ver. 16. See Poole on "Mt 5:15", See Poole on "Mr 4:21".

Luke 8:17

Ver. 17. This we have also met with twice before. See Poole on "Mt 5:15", See Poole on "Mr 4:22".

Luke 8:18

Ver. 18. See Poole on "Mr 4:24", See Poole on "Mt 13:12", See Poole on "Mt 25:29".

Luke 8:19

Ver. 19-21. See Poole on "Mt 12:46", and following verses to Mt 12:50. See Poole on "Mr 3:31" and following verses to Mr 3:35.

Luke 8:22

Ver. 22-25. This whole history we have also before met with, both in Mt 8:23-27, and Mr 4:35-41. See Poole on "Mt 8:23", and following verses to Mt 8:27, also See Poole on "Mr 4:35", and following verses to Mr 4:41.

Luke 8:26

Ver. 26-40. We have had this whole story Mt 8:28-34, and Mr 5:1-21. See Poole on "Mt 8:28", and following verses to Mt 8:34, and See Poole on "Mr 5:1" and following verses to Mr 5:21.

Luke 8:41

Ver. 41-56. We had both these pieces of history twice before related, by Matthew, Mt 9:18-26, and by Mark, Mr 5:22-43, with some further circumstances. See Poole on "Mt 9:18", and following verses to Mt 9:26 also See Poole on "Mr 5:22", and following verses to Mr 5:43. Christ's saying, Lu 8:45, *Who touched me?* and again, Lu 8:46, *Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me;* doth not argue that Christ knew not of the woman's coming and touching him, or did not voluntarily send out that virtue that healed her; far be any such thoughts from any pious, intelligent souls: she was not healed by her touch of the border of his garment, but by his powerful will, commanding such a miraculous effect: he only spake this to bring forth the miracle into light, which was wrought secretly, so as the people took no notice of it. Healing virtue went out of Christ upon an act of his will, not necessarily. From Lu 8:55 is confuted the atheism of those who would make the soul to be merely the crasis, or some affection of the body; and it is proved to be a being that can subsist of itself, in a state of separation from the body.

It is said, *her spirit came again;* not, Christ gave her a new spirit. Christ did not here exert a creating power; only sent forth that power with which he was clothed to raise the dead. For other things observable from this story, see the notes before mentioned upon the parallel texts.

Luke 9:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 9:1-6 Christ sendeth his apostles to work miracles and preach the gospel.

Lu 9:7-9 Herod desireth to see him.

Lu 9:10,11 The apostles return.

Lu 9:12-17 Christ feedeth five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes.

Lu 9:18-22 The different opinions concerning Christ; Peter's confession of him: Christ foretells his own death and resurrection.

Lu 9:23-27 He showeth his followers the necessity of self denial, and that they must not be ashamed of owning his gospel.

Lu 9:28-36 He is transfigured,

Lu 9:37-42 healeth a demoniac,

Lu 9:43-45 again foreshoweth his sufferings,

Lu 9:46-48 checks the ambitious disputes of his disciples,

Lu 9:49,50 will not have them forbid any one to work miracles in his name,

Lu 9:51-56 reproveth the fiery zeal of James and John against the Samaritans who would not receive him,

Lu 9:57-62 and proposes terms to three persons who offer to follow him.

Ver. 1-6. We have heard of the choosing of these twelve disciples, and their names, Lu 6:13-16 Mr 3:14-19. Our Saviour chose them to be with him, to learn of him, and to be instructed by him, and to be witnesses of what he said and did; after some time thus spent, he sends them forth to preach the gospel, and giveth them a power to confirm the doctrine which they preached, by several miraculous operations. Matthew takes no notice of their election, only of their mission. Both Mark and Luke take notice of both. Lu 9:3-6 give us an account of the instructions he gave them; we met with them all before, and a more full account of them, See Poole on "Mt 10:1" and following verses to Mt 10:42. See Poole on "Mr 6:7" and following verses to Mr 6:11.

Luke 9:7

Ver. 7-9. This Herod was Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, who had beheaded John the Baptist; he heareth of these great things done by Christ, and διηπορει, saith the evangelist; it is a word that signifieth a great disturbance, and perplexity of mind, when a man is in doubt and fear, and knoweth not what counsels to take or follow: it is used Lu 24:4 Ac 2:12 5:24 10:17. The other evangelists say Herod himself guessed it was John the Baptist, whom he had beheaded. Oh the power of a guilty conscience! He had murdered John, now he is afraid his ghost haunted him, or that his soul was entered into another body, that it might be revenged on him. Others guessed variously. Herod knoweth not what to think, but desireth to see Christ, possibly that he might make up some judgment about him, possibly out of mere curiosity. But we read not that he did see him until Pilate sent him to him after his examination of him, Lu 23:8.

Luke 9:10

Ver. 10,11. The evangelists give us but a summary account of things. We read of the mission, or sending out, of the apostles, Lu 9:1. Here we read of their return, and giving their Lord an account of their discharge of the trust he had reposed in them. Being returned, our Saviour goeth with them into a place near Bethsaida, not much inhabited, and therefore called *desert*. He never wanted followers, nor a heart to receive them, and to take all opportunities to do them good. Many followed him; he receiveth them, and preacheth to them for the good of their souls, and healeth those amongst them that were sick, to teach us to join spiritual with bodily, and bodily with spiritual, alms. Spiritual alms, such as instruction, reproof, counsel, are as much better than those that relieve only bodily wants, as

the soul is better than the body. Spiritual alms, without bodily relief, from such as are able to give them, are fittest for spiritual persons; carnal, ignorant people, that have no sense of spiritual things, must, like children, be allured into a good opinion of the things and ways of God by some bodily charity, and so taken by guile, and enticed to the knowledge of God.

Luke 9:12

Ver. 12-17. The history of this miracle is recorded by all the four evangelists. See Poole on "Mt 14:15", and following verses to Mt 14:22, and See Poole on "Mr 6:35", and following verses to Mr 6:44. We shall again meet with it, Joh 6:5-14, with some further circumstances. Luke hath nothing but what we have before met with.

Luke 9:18

Ver. 18-22. Matthew and Mark tell us this discourse passed at Caesarea Philippi (or at least one of the same import). Matthew also gives us an account of it with more circumstances. See Poole on "Mt 16:13", and following verses to Mt 16:23.

As he was alone praying; that is, free from the multitude, for the next words tell us, the *disciples were with him.* (Lu 9:22) is not to be found in the other evangelists; and if Luke hath reported these words in the right order of time, they afford us a probable reason of what is said Lu 9:21, why Christ would not yet be published as the Christ, or the Son of God. Because he was to suffer, and it might much have shaken people's faith, as to that point, if they had seen the person whom they believed such suffering, and to be so despitefully used as he was; he therefore desired to be concealed as to that, until he should be declared the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead.

Luke 9:23

Ver. 23,24. We have met with these sayings before, See Poole on "Mt 16:24", See Poole on "Mt 16:25". See Poole on "Mt 10:38", See Poole on "Mt 10:39". See Poole on "Mr 8:34" and See Poole on "Mr 8:35".

Luke 9:25

Ver. 25. See Poole on "Mt 16:26", See Poole on "Mr 8:36".

Luke 9:26

Ver. 26,27. See Poole on "Mt 16:28" and See Poole on "Mr 9:1". Luke seems here to have recorded several sayings of our Saviour, spoken not all at the same time.

Luke 9:28

Ver. 28-36. See Poole on "Mt 17:1", and following verses to Mt 17:9. See Poole on "Mr 9:2", and following verses to Mr 9:10.

Luke 9:37

Ver. 37-45. See Poole on "Mt 17:14", and following verses to Mt 17:21. See Poole on "Mr 9:14", and following verses to Mr 9:29. Of the people's astonishment and amazement at the sight of Christ's miracles, we often hear much; of their embracing him as their Saviour, and owning him as the Christ, we read little. Thus far many of them were come, indeed the most, (the Scribes, and Pharisees, and Sadducees only excepted), that they believed Christ was a great Prophet, a man sent of God; authorized by God to reveal his will, and empowered from God to do many things, which none but God had originally a power to do. Others were gone a step further, viz. to believe not only that he was a Prophet, but that Prophet foretold by Moses, De 18:15 Joh 1:21,45; the Christ of God, as Peter expressed it, he that should redeem Israel, Lu 24:21. That they had not a true notion of the Messiah, either as to his person, that the Divine and human nature were united in his person, or as to his work, that it was not to redeem Israel from their bodily servitude, but from their sins only, will appear to any from the whole history of the gospel. Nor indeed doth our Saviour hasten their faith in this revelation, I mean the perfecting and confirming of it, knowing that it would be a great shaking to their faith in him, in this notion, and indeed as the Messiah, to see him so shamefully abused by the vilest objects of the people, (as he was at his passion), and then hanging upon the cross, and dying, until they should also see him by his own power risen from the dead, and be confirmed concerning the truth of his resurrection. Where therefore he saw this seed of precious faith springing up, as it did in Peter and divers others, who it is plain apprehended him more than man, as he did not discourage nor blame it, but highly commended it; so neither did he please to strengthen it, so as to put them out of all doubt about it, and often charged them not to publish it abroad, and bends himself to prepare them against this great obstacle, which he saw would be in their way, to wit, his sufferings. This is the second time now that in this chapter we find him inculcating it. And there was need of it, for the evangelist telleth us that *they understood it not, it was hidden from them*. They could easily understand how an ordinary prophet might be delivered into the hands of men, but how the Messiah, the Christ, that Prophet, he of whom some of them believed that he was

more than a mere man, how he should be thus delivered, thus suffer, they could not understand; and they saw Christ as to this point so reserved and private, and forbidding the publication of it, that they feared to be too particular with him about it.

Luke 9:46

Ver. 46-48. See Poole on "Mt 18:1", and following verses to Mt 18:6. See Poole on "Mr 9:33", and following verses to Mr 9:37. This paragraph showeth what need there was of the preceding discourse, that our Saviour should prepare them with a preinforming them about his suffering, that when they saw it their faith in him as the Messiah might not fail; for they were possessed with the common notion of their country, that the Messiah should deliver them from the temporal pressures which they were under, and exercise a civil or military secular power; this made them think of places of priority and greatness, about which we often find them disputing. Our Lord, to bring them off that false notion of him and his kingdom, taketh a child, and setteth him before them, and saith, *Whosoever shall receive this child, &c.* What Luke saith must be interpreted by what we had before in Matthew and Mark. This child, that is, one that is as humble as this child, &c.: see the notes before mentioned.

Luke 9:49

Ver. 49,50. Mark saith further, that Christ added, *for there is no man, which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me:* See Poole on "Mr 9:38", See Poole on "Mr 9:39".

Luke 9:51

Ver. 51. From this to Lu 9:56 we have a piece of history recorded by no other evangelist but Luke; but is of great use to us, both to let us know, that our Saviour laid down his life, no man took it from him, and to let us see to what height differences about religion ordinarily arise, and what intemperateness is often found, as to them, in the spirits of the best of people, as also what is the will of our great Master as to the government of our spirits in such cases. The going up of our Saviour to Jerusalem at this time was his last journey thither.

When the time was come that he should be received up; Ἐν τῷ συμπληροῦσθαι τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ἀναληψεως αὐτου; that is, when the time was drawing nigh when Christ should ascend up into heaven; so the word is used, Mr 16:19 Ac 1:11 1Ti 3:16. But why doth the evangelist express it thus? Why doth he not say, when he was to suffer; but skips over his death, and only mentions his ascension?

1. That is included; Christ was first to suffer, and then to enter into his glory.
2. Christ's death is called a lifting up from the earth, Joh 12:32.
3. What if we should say that Christ's death is thus expressed, to let us know that the death of Christ was to him a thing that his eye was not so much upon, as the glory which he immediately was to enter into after;

so as he calls his very death a taking up, as that which immediately preceded it, thereby teaching us to overlook sufferings and death, as not worthy to be named or mentioned, and to look only to that taking up into our Father's glory, which is the portion of all believers; when they die, they are but taken up from the earth: and though our bodies still stay behind a while, death having a power over us, yet of them also there shall be a taking up. Upon both which takings up our eyes should be so fixed, as to overlook all the sufferings of this life, as not worthy to be named.

He stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. Some think this was not our Saviour's last motion thither before his passion, but then it would not have been said *προσωπον εστηριξε, he set his face,* or, he confirmed his face. He was now in Galilee, Jerusalem (that killed the prophets) was the place designed for his suffering; betwixt Galilee and Jerusalem lay Samaria, through which he was to pass.

Luke 9:52

Ver. 52,53. The land of Canaan was by Joshua divided among all the twelve tribes of Israel, as we read in the book of Joshua, Jos 14:1-15 15:1-63 16:1-10 17:1-18 Saul, David, and Solomon (after the death of Joshua, the judges, and Samuel) ruled over them all; but Rehoboam the son of Solomon, following the counsel of the young men in his counsels, ten tribes revolted from the house of David, 1Ki 12:16-19. Jeroboam brought them to idolatry, Lu 9:28,29, setting up calves at Dan and Bethel. So as that there was a perpetual difference between the Israelites and those that adhered to the house of David, both upon a civil and religious account. This held for about two hundred and sixty years. In the time of Hoshea, their last king, the king of Assyria, after a siege of three years, takes Samaria their head city. Of this we have an account, 2Ki 17:6, as also of those sins which had provoked God to give them up into his hands. 2Ki 17:24 we read that *the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel.* He removed the most of the Jews, 2Ki 17:6, *and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the Driver of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.* After this there were several mutations in the government of those countries. We must not imagine that all the Jews were carried away, but the chief and principal men; and we read in 2Ki 17:1-41, that a priest was sent back to instruct the new colonies how to worship the God of the country; because the lions infesting them, they conceived their non acquaintance with the methods of worship used toward the God of that country was the cause of it, 2Ki 17:26,27. But yet the people of the several nations brought thither worshipped their several idols, as may be read there, 2Ki 17:29. After this, about a hundred and sixty years, these places came under the dominion of Cyrus, who gave the Jews a liberty to return, but it chiefly concerned those that belonged to the kingdom of Judah, for we read, Ezr 1:5, that they were *the fathers of Judah and Benjamin* that

rose up to return. The Samaritans were their enemies as to the building of the temple, Ezr 4:4,5. After this, they fell under the power, first of the Grecians, then of the Romans, under which they at this time were. This old feud, both upon the account of their former civil difference, and their difference in religion, still held, so as there was a great enmity (especially occasioned by their difference in religion) betwixt those who belonged to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the Samaritans, who were indeed idolaters. The Jews (for so now were they only called who adhered to the house of David) had no dealings with them, Joh 4:9; though it be the opinion of some that there were common civilities between them, and that the rigidness lay on the Jewish part, rather than the Samaritans'. Galilee lay beyond Samaria, and it should seem was more generally inhabited by native Jews. The king of Assyria planted his colonies (it is probable) more in that which was now more strictly called Samaria, which lay in the heart of the land; which might be the reason that the inhabitants of that part now called Samaria were more absurd and gross in their worship than the inhabitants of Galilee, amongst whom Christ so long preached. From whence (as was before said) Christ going to Jerusalem to the feast was to pass. The Samaritans refused to receive him, which ordinarily, it is said, they did not to passengers, but possibly their knowing that he was going to the feast was the cause, or his attendants might be more than they liked. When we come to Joh 4:1-54 we shall hear more of the religious differences between the Jews and the Samaritans. This is enough to have at present noted.

Luke 9:54

Ver. 54. The history of Elijah to which the disciples refer, is doubtless that, 2Ki 1:10, where Elijah, not without direction from God, called fire from heaven to destroy those captains and their fifties which the king sent to take him.

Luke 9:55

Ver. 55,56. The term *spirit* sometimes signifies, the inward motions, propensities, and inclinations of the soul, influenced either from the Holy

Spirit of God, or from the evil spirit. So the term is used [2Ti 1:7](#). You do not (saith our Saviour) consider what kind of motions these are, which you indulge yourselves in. The case of Elijah and this case had three remarkable differences.

1. The people of Israel at that time had been in an apostasy but of few years comparatively to these Samaritans; they were fallen into it in the sight of the true worship of God, at that time upheld in Judah. They were not only stiff in it, but the king sends these captains to apprehend Elijah for declaring what God had commanded him to declare. These Samaritans were under the prejudices of antiquity, and prescription for many hundreds of years. Histories tell us, that the Samaritan temple, on Mount Gerizim, built in opposition to the temple at Jerusalem, was built by one Sanballat, Darius's governor in those parts, to be revenged on the Jews for turning his son-in-law Manasseh from the priesthood at Jerusalem, which if it be true, the Samaritans had been fixed now in their false worship more than five hundred years. Nor were these that we read of any of the heads and rulers, but probably ordinary country people, rooted so long in this corrupt way, and doing this in zeal to their own temple on Mount Gerizim, and so inclined to show no favour to those who in any devotion were going to the opposite temple. Christ pitieth them under these prejudices, and though he doth not approve of their worship, yet he did not think that the way to change their minds was to call for fire from heaven against them, nor would he be so severe against them. It is not the will of God that we should approve of any corrupt worship, and join with those that use it; but neither is it his will that we should by fire and sword go about to suppress it, and bring men off from it. Antiquity, or the practice of our forefathers, is no sufficient plea to justify any worship. (It was the Samaritans' plea, [Joh 4:20](#).) But yet where any such prejudice against the truth is, it calleth to us for mild and gentle behaviour towards such as are under those disadvantages for the receiving of the truth.
2. But, secondly, there was a difference in the call of Elijah. He was an extraordinary prophet, who did nothing of this nature but by an immediate impulse and direction; so as what he did was in zeal for God, guided by a knowledge of the will of God. The disciples had no such call.

3. The times differed; Elijah acted under the legal dispensation, which was more severe; they were under the more mild and gentle dispensation of the gospel. And in this question they did but indulge their passions, and sinful desire of revenge; therefore, saith our Saviour, *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.* Our Saviour lets them know that they were under a more mild and gentle dispensation, by propounding his own example: *The Son of man* (saith he) *came not to destroy men's lives, but to save.* The term translated lives signifieth also souls; but if we consider the apostles' question, which was not whether they should call for fire from heaven to destroy their souls, but to destroy them as to their lives here, it will well enough justify our translators rendering it in this place lives. You see, saith our Saviour, by my healing the sick, raising the dead, &c., that my business is not to make my ministry ungrateful to men, by any ways prejudicing them in their outward concerns. If it were translated souls, it is yet a great truth: Christ came not to destroy men's souls, but to bring the means of salvation and eternal happiness; if they reject these, and perish, their destruction is of themselves.

Luke 9:57

Ver. 57,58. Matthew saith, Mt 8:19, this man was a scribe. See Poole on "Mt 8:19". Let those who have stately houses, and think them worth glorying in, or that they are things fit for men to value themselves upon, despising their poor brethren that want such accommodations of this life, digest this text.

Luke 9:59

Ver. 59,60. See Poole on "Mt 8:21". See Poole on "Mt 8:22". How free is Divine grace! The scribe offers to follow Christ: Christ encourages him not. To another that made no such offer, he first speaketh, saying, *Follow me*, and will admit of no excuse.

Luke 9:61

Ver. 61,62. Matthew (who mentioned the other two) mentions not this third person. Some doubt whether we well translate these words, *αποταξασθαι τοις εις τον οικον μου*, *bid them at my house farewell*; or whether it were not better translated, to order the things or persons relating to my house. Let it be translated either way, it signifies a too much worldliness of mind in this disciple, which our Saviour checks in the next words, saying, *No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back*, *εις τα οπισω*, to the things behind, *is fit for the kingdom of God*. Some think it is an allusion to the story of Elisha's call. 1Ki 19:19,20. *Elijah passing by him ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth, cast his mantle upon him. And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee.* Be that as it will, here is a plain allusion to the work of a ploughman, and a comparing of a minister of the gospel in his duty with the ploughman in his work. The ploughman is obliged to look forward to his work, or he will never draw his furrows either straight enough, or of a just depth; so must a minister of the gospel: if he be once called out of secular employments to the service of God in the ministry, he is bound to mind and attend that; that is enough to take up the whole man, and his whole strength and time, he had need of no other things to mind or look after, the things of the world are things behind him. Not that God debars his ministers (in case of exigence) to work for their bread with their hands, as Paul did; but they ought not, without apparent necessity, to entangle themselves with the things of this life, so as to make them their business.

Luke 10:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 10:1-12 Christ sendeth out the seventy disciples to work miracles and to preach.

Lu 10:13-16 He pronounces a woe against Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum.

Lu 10:17-20 The seventy return with joy; Christ showeth

them wherein to rejoice.

Lu 10:21,22 He thanks his Father for having revealed his gospel to the simple only.

Lu 10:23,24 He showeth the blessedness of those that were called into his church.

Lu 10:25-37 He teacheth a lawyer how to attain eternal life; and by the parable of the good Samaritan showeth whom we are to consider as our neighbour.

Lu 10:38-42 He commendeth Mary's attention to his doctrine in preference to Martha's busy care to entertain him.

Ver. 1. We heard before of Christ's first electing, then sending out, twelve, Lu 6:13-16 9:1-6; and we heard of their return, and giving an account of their trust to their Lord, Lu 10:10. What their particular account was we nowhere read, but it was such as our Saviour judged the harvest too great for the hands of the labourers. He therefore now resolves to send out seventy more. The names of these we have not in the evangelist, only that Christ sent them out, and that he sent them *two and two*, which might be for their better mutual assistance of each other, and also for their mutual testimony one for another. When God sent out the first conductors, and governors of his people, he sent two, Moses and Aaron. John Baptist sent two of his disciples to Christ. Christ sent two of his disciples to prepare the passover, Lu 22:8. There seemeth to be nothing mysterious in this. Man is a sociable creature, and it is not good for him to be alone. We cannot determine that our Saviour had any regard to the numbers of *twelve* and *seventy*; though it is certain that both those numbers amongst the Jews seem to have had a more than ordinary character, twelve being the number of the tribes of Israel, according to the promise, Ge 17:20 49:28; at Elim they found *twelve wells of water*, Ex 15:27; according to the number of the tribes were the twelve pillars, Ex 24:4, and the twelve stones in the breastplate of judgment, Ex 28:21; and the number of the cakes for the shew bread was to be twelve, Le 24:5. The princes of Israel were twelve, Nu 1:44; and twelve men were sent to spy out the land of Canaan, De 1:23. So we shall observe that in a multitude of things they kept to the number of twelve: John in his description of the new Jerusalem, which he saw in his vision, says, it had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates were the names of the twelve tribes, Re 21:12. And the wall had twelve foundations, &c., Lu 10:14. And for the number of seventy: Jacob's

family, when they went down into Egypt, were seventy souls, Ge 46:27; they mourned for Jacob seventy days, Ge 50:3; at Elim they met with seventy palm trees, Nu 33:9; the posterity of Jacob was in Babylon seventy years. The Jewish sanhedrim, or great court chosen upon the advice of Jethro, is said to have consisted first of seventy, then of seventy-two persons. So as the numbers of twelve and seventy seem to have been numbers to which the Jews had some respect. Whether our Saviour, in the choice of those whom he first sent to preach the gospel, had any respect or not to the Jewish value for those numbers, or designed by it to show them, that he was about to set up a new kingdom and government, which, though differing from what they had exercised formerly, yet in some little things should have some conformity to them, we cannot determine. We shall find the same powers and authority given to these seventy as to the twelve, and the same instructions: how some come to imagine a difference of order betwixt them I cannot tell; no such thing

appeareth from the instructions given the one or the other upon their first sending out.

Luke 10:2

Ver. 2. See Poole on "Mt 9:37" and See Poole on "Mt 9:38", where these words are put immediately before the sending out of the twelve. Both the twelve and the seventy, all that Christ ever sent out, were to be labourers in the Lord's harvest.

Luke 10:3

Ver. 3,4. We met with these instructions before, and opened them in our notes. See Poole on "Mt 10:9", See Poole on "Mt 10:10" and See Poole on "Mt 10:16", only there we had not those words, *and salute no man by the way*. The meaning of that is no more than, make all possible speed: see 2Ki 4:29.

Luke 10:5

Ver. 5-7. See Poole on "Mt 10:11", and See Poole on "Mr 6:10". The instructions, as to the substance of them, are the same here as there, though a little differing in the terms.

Luke 10:8

Ver. 8-12. We have met with the same instructions before in Matthew and Mark. See Poole on "Mt 10:11", and following verses to Mt 10:15. See Poole on "Mr 6:10", See Poole on "Mr 6:11". There is some difference in words. Matthew saith, —*inquire who in the city is worthy*, and, Lu 10:13, *if the house be worthy*; Luke saith, *if the son of peace be there*; they both mean the same thing: if there be any in it, that belong to God's election of grace, any whom God intends by you to call, and make partakers of the peace of the gospel. For other things relating to the opening of the words, see the notes before mentioned. Only we may from hence observe for our instruction,

1. That it is the will of Christ, that his ministers should not be too solicitous for a livelihood. As the labourer is worthy of his hire, so he that sends them into his harvest will see they shall be fed. Let them look to their calling, and to the fulfilling of their ministry; God will see they shall be fed.
2. That the society of ministers of the gospel, in cities and houses, should not be with debauchees, but with those that are worthy, so far as man can judge; such as are their Master's friends and servants should be their companions.
3. Those are most worthy in places amongst whom the Son of peace is, men and women that have the most knowledge of and love for Christ.
4. The ministers of Christ ought to carry themselves with all imaginable civility, wishing good to all, and doing good to all.

5. Christ's ministers ought not to make their bellies their gods, — *eat such things as are set before you.*
6. They have a Divine licence to take and use for their necessities such things as men give them.
7. Christ expects that his people should maintain his ministers, not depriving the labourers of their hire, nor muzzling the mouths of the oxen which tread out the corn, 1Co 9:9,10, nor preferring their servants for their worldly occasions before such as labour for their souls, and in that work are God's messengers to them, and his servants in the first place, though employed in watching for people's souls.
8. The not giving a livelihood to ministers, is a not receiving them, that is, provided the people be able.
9. People by not receiving the gospel of peace brought them by faithful ministers shall do them no hurt, their peace shall return unto them. They shall be a sweet savour unto God, even as to them that perish. Their judgment is with the Lord, and their work with their God, though they labour in vain; though Israel be not gathered, they shall be glorified. Men proportion their rewards according to successes of servants. God more justly proportions his rewards to men's sincerity and diligence in their labour.
10. If men refuse the gospel, yet they shall know the kingdom of God is come nigh unto them. If they will not be subject to his kingdom of grace, yet they shall be subdued by the kingdom of his power and justice.
11. There will come a day when men that have the offers of the gospel of peace, and refuse them, slighting and despising his ministers and their message, will find that they had better have lived in Sodom when it was burnt with fire and brimstone; their portion of wrath in the day of judgment will be larger and bitterer than the portion of the men of Sodom. Let all who live in our days hear and fear, and in time break off their sins by a true repentance, lest they go to hell at the highest disadvantage.

Luke 10:13

Ver. 13-15 See Poole on "Mt 11:21", and following verses to Mt 11:24.

Luke 10:16

Ver. 16. See Poole on "Mt 10:40".

Luke 10:17

Ver. 17. As we before read of the twelve coming back to give Christ an account of their success, so we here have the same of the seventy. Whether this joy of the seventy was more carnal than it ought, they rather rejoicing in that new power which they had received from Christ, than in the demonstration of Christ's Divine power, and the confirmation of the doctrine of the gospel by these miraculous operations, is hard to determine; for though Christ's reply seemeth to have a check in it, yet it is so qualified by the term *rather*, Lu 10:20, that we cannot from thence absolutely conclude any such thing from it. Here is a difference to be observed between Christ's and his disciples' casting out of devils. Christ did it in his own name, by his own word of command, power, and authority; the disciples did it in Christ's name, and by a power and authority derived from him.

Luke 10:18

Ver. 18. Lightning comes suddenly, and with thunder. The thunder of the gospel brought down the devil as lightning: and indeed this is observable, the devil is so busy in no places where the gospel prevails, as in places

where that joyful sound is not come, whether we consider his power with reference to men's bodies or souls. This is one general advantage of gospel preaching, the devil will not endure the sound of it, so as to impose upon mankind, at that rate which he doth upon ignorant persons, that are heathens, or only differing from them in that they are baptized, and call themselves Christians. Christ saw this, as God, for the devil is not visible to human senses, as neither are any spirits; which showed the impudence of that popish impostor in Germany, who selling indulgences, (by which he pretended souls were delivered from purgatory), called to the people to look up and see them fly away. But Christ could see it as God, for he certainly knew that it would be, and that it already was, the blessed effect of the gospel.

Luke 10:19

Ver. 19. Christ doth here:

1. Confirm the power before given to these seventy for working miracles, that they might not think that it ceased upon the determination of their first mission.
2. He confirmeth his promise to them for his presence with them, and protection of them.

Interpreters think here is a manifest allusion to Ps 91:13, *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under thy feet*: which must be understood figuratively, the sense being, that nothing should hurt them. This promise was more specially verified for some years in God's protection of time first ministers of the gospel, until they had done their work; and shall be fulfilled in a sense to the end of the world, according to the promise in Ps 91:13. Nothing shall hurt their souls, as to the favour of God and their eternal happiness, nor their bodies, so far forth as, or so long as, God in his wisdom shall judge fit. They have a further power also given them more common to all the ministers of the gospel sent by Christ, yea, and to all Christians. They have a power over all the power of the enemy; God will not be wanting to them in a power to resist the devil, and they have a promise that, being resisted, he shall flee from them.

Luke 10:20

Ver. 20. It is a usual thing in holy writ, to have prohibitions delivered in general terms, which must be understood in a restrained sense. That it is so here, appeareth plainly by the word *rather*, prefixed to *rejoice*, in the latter part of the sentence. For it was doubtless a just cause of joy and rejoicing to them that Christ had honoured them with such an extraordinary gift and power, but not of so much joy as to know that their names were written in the book of life; for as the good was infinitely greater, so a proportionable joy was requisite upon the assurance of it.

The expression *written in heaven*, is equivalent to the being written *in the book of life*, whereby is signified, either the certain designation of some to eternal life, or effectual calling. We read of this *book of life*, Re 3:5 20:12,15 21:27 22:19. It is called the Lamb's book, Re 13:8, and it is said it was written *from the foundation of the world*; which will justify those divines who understand it of a particular election from eternity; whereas it is objected that when amongst the twelve there was a *son of perdition*, it is unreasonable to think that all the seventy were elect vessels. It is easily answered, that our Saviour's words were true according to the usual phrase of speaking, if the generality of them only were such. Nor need our Saviour be understood as asserting all their names were so written, but only asserting the greatest cause of joy to be, if men can by their calling find that their election is sure. From our Saviour's words we may infer,

1. That there is a book of life, an election of grace.
2. That there are names written in this book; it is an election of persons.
3. That men may know that their names are written in that book, otherwise they could not rejoice; no man rejoiceth but in a good with which he hath some degree of union.
4. That this is a greater cause of joy, than for a man to know that he hath a power to cast out devils.

Men may be made use of to cast out devils in Christ's name, who yet

may go to the devil at last, Mt 7:22,23; so cannot those whose names are written in the book of life. But I cannot understand that our Saviour in these words asserts that all the names of the seventy were written in that book. The tendency of his discourse is rather to quicken them to give all diligence to make sure of this cause of joy and rejoicing.

Luke 10:21

Ver. 21,22. See Poole on "Mt 11:25", and following verses to, Mt 11:27, where we met with these words of our Saviour.

Luke 10:23

Ver. 23,24. See Poole on "Mt 13:16", and See Poole on "Mt 13:17".

Luke 10:25

Ver. 25-28. These four verses would incline one to think that Luke here records the same piece of history which we met with in Mt 22:35-40, and Mr 12:28-34; See Poole on "Mt 22:35" and following verses to Mt 22:40, See Poole on "Mr 12:28" and following verses to Mr 12:34; but neither of those evangelists have the following part of this discourse, which makes me doubtful whether Luke speaks of the same person coming to Christ which the others mention. A lawyer he was, who came to our Saviour upon a design to tempt, that is, to make a trial of him, whether he would deliver any doctrine contrary to the law of Moses. It is plain that he fancied that the eternal life which Christ preached was to be obtained by wing what the law required. Our Saviour agreeth it, that if he did what the law required, according as he himself had given an account of it, he should live. I apprehend no absurdity, to affirm that our Saviour speaks here of living eternally. It is rather absurd to fancy that our Saviour did not answer *ad idem*, to the thing about which the question was propounded. Neither is salvation impossible because the law in itself could not give life, but because of the weakness of our flesh, so as we cannot fulfil it. So that

considering our infirmity, the law serveth to us only as a schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ; and as a mark which we ought to shoot at, though we cannot shoot home; a rule to direct us in our duty, though we cannot perform or fulfil it.

Luke 10:29

Ver. 29. This lawyer's desire to justify himself spake him a hypocrite. The reason of that question, *Who is my neighbour?* was the notion of the neighbour (mentioned in the law) which the scribes and Pharisees had, who counted none their neighbours but their friends and benefactors, at least none but those that were of their own nation or particular sect; and had taught their people, that they might hate their enemies. Our Saviour (this being but a captious question, considering the received interpretation amongst them of the law of God) doth not think fit to answer his question directly, but telling him a story, maketh him answer himself.

Luke 10:30

Ver. 30-37. It is certain that the principal scope of our Saviour in this history, or parable, was to convince the lawyer, that every one is our neighbour to whom God offereth us an opportunity of doing good, whether he be of our nation or region or not. Every object of our mercy is our neighbour, whom God requireth us to love as ourselves. This was quite contrary to the common doctrine of the scribes' and Pharisees' interpreting the law, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, and excellently served our Saviour's design, to show this lawyer that he understood not, much less observed, the law of God in that manner, as that he could justify himself from the violation of it. He also by the by showeth him, that the Samaritans, whom the Jews so much abhorred, better understood the law of God, than the ecclesiastical guides of those times, who yet pretended to be teachers of it to others; for some of them by the light of nature discerned themselves obliged to do good to every one that stood in need of their help, or if not by the light of nature, yet by the light of revelation in

the law of Moses; but the scribes and Pharisees, by their false interpretation of the Divine law, had taught people to omit a great part of their duty required by the Divine law, and so could not hope to be justified, or to obtain eternal life and salvation, from the observation of it.

Luke 10:38

Ver. 38,39. Interpreters think this village was Bethany, and that this Martha and Mary were the same which are mentioned Joh 11:2. Inns probably were not so frequent then, and in those places, as they are now, so as strangers were often received in private houses. Christ loseth no opportunity of preaching the gospel; while they were preparing supper, he was entertaining the family with the glad tidings of the gospel, *the feast of fat things made upon the mountain*, Isa 25:6. *The lips of the righteous feed many*, Pr 10:21. It was their fashion to have disciples sit at their doctors' feet, to hear their word; there Mary fixes herself.

Luke 10:40

Ver. 40. Two things are blameable in Martha:

1. That she made too much ado about the entertainment of our Saviour. That she entertained our Saviour she did well; but herein she erred, that she made her entertainment of him so troublesome, as it would not give her leave to take that advantage, which she might, or ought to have done, from the entertainment of a prophet.
2. That she is displeas'd with her sister because she would not lend her hand, but chose rather to sit at Christ's feet and hear his word, and

desireth Christ to send her away to her assistance.

Luke 10:41

Ver. 41,42. Our Saviour plainly blames Martha for her too great solicitude and trouble to provide a dinner, or supper, for him, who had meat to eat which she was not aware of, it being his meat and drink to do the will of his Father, and to preach the gospel. Interpreters much trouble themselves in determining what that *one thing* is, which our Saviour here saith is *needful*. Some think our Saviour meaneth no more than, one dish is enough; but this certainly is too low a sense. Others would have this *one thing* to be a life of meditation and contemplation, and that this was that *good part* Mary had *chosen*. If Mary had thus spent her whole life they might have said something for this. But certainly Mary's choosing to take advantage of Christ's company, rather to spend an hour or two in hearing of him, than in preparing a supper for him, will prove no such thing. I should interpret it generally, concerning the care of the soul with reference to eternity. That is certainly the one thing necessary, that was the better part, which Mary had chosen, as to which Christ would not discourage her, nor any way blunt the edge of those holy desires he had kindled in her, an effect of which study and care was her sitting at the feet of Christ to hear his word.

Luke 11:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 11:1-13 Christ teacheth to pray, assuring that God will give all good things to them that ask him.

Lu 11:14-26 He casteth out a devil, and reproveth the blasphemy of the Pharisees, who ascribed the miracle to the power of Beelzebub.

Lu 11:27,28 He showeth who are the truly blessed,
Lu 11:29-36 and the inexcusableness of not believing his gospel.

Lu 11:37-54 He reprehends the outward show of holiness in the Pharisees, and pronounces woes against them and the scribes and lawyers.

Ver. 1. This seemeth to be a different time from that mentioned by Matthew, where our Saviour directed his disciples to pray; there his direction was part of his sermon on the mount. Besides, the doxology or conclusion is there left out. It is said here, *as he was praying in a certain place*. Christ looked upon all places as holy enough for prayer. It also looks as if at this time our Saviour was not at his more secret devotions, but with the twelve, (which were his family), praying with them.

When he ceased: this is very observable against those who pretend impulses of the Spirit, to disturb ministers in the time when they are praying and preaching; it may easily be known from what spirit such impulses are. The disciples of Christ often propounded questions to him after preaching, but never interrupting him in his work, nor before he was retired into a house. They now come to be informed about prayer, but they stay till he had first ceased. We having no account in holy writ of John's disciples asking him, or his teaching of them to pray, are more at a loss to determine whether our Saviour did intend that his disciples should use these words, as the phrase here seemeth to import, or only pray in this sense, *after this manner*, as Matthew saith; indeed nothing can be concluded from either phrase by any judicious person.

For as we read in many places in Scripture, that Christ *answered and said*, when it is manifest the meaning is, he spake words to that import or sense, (the evangelists reporting the words spoken with variations of expression), so when we pray we may say, *Our Father which art in, heaven, &c.*, though we do not use the same words and syllables.

Luke 11:2

Ver. 2-4. See Poole on "Mt 6:9-13". Whoso compares this prayer as it is recorded by Matthew will find the form of words differing in more things than one; not only the doxology or conclusion is left out wholly by Luke, but for *σημερον*, there we have *χαθ' ημεραν*, here, for *οφειληματα* Luke hath *αμαρτιας*, for *ως και ημεις αφιεμεν τοις οφειλειταις ημων* we have here *και γαρ αυτοι αφιεμεν παντι οφειλοντι ημιν*; from whence plainly appears that our Saviour did not intend to oblige his

disciples to the same syllabical words, but only to words of the same import, that is, to praying for the same things: yet that Christians have a liberty to use the same words is out of question, and as much out of question that they have a liberty to vary, still keeping their eyes upon the matter of this prayer, and not forgetting that when they go unto God in that holy duty.

Luke 11:5

Ver. 5-9. The plain meaning of our Saviour in this parable, is to teach us that we ought not only to pray, but to be importunate with God in prayer; to *continue in prayer*, as the apostle phrases it, Col 4:2, and to watch *thereunto with all perseverance*, Eph 6:18. This in the Greek is called *αναίδειαν*, impudence, which though in our language it is generally taken in an ill sense, yet here signifieth no more than a holy boldness, or pursuing our petitions notwithstanding delays or denials. For those words, Lu 11:9, See Poole on "Mt 7:7", where the same words are found.

Luke 11:10

Ver. 10-13. See Poole on "Mt 7:8" and following verses to Mt 7:11. As our Saviour's design in the former words appeareth to be our information, that thought the hand of God be full of good things proportioned to all the necessities of his creatures, yet they must not expect to have them without asking, he will for them *be inquired of by the house of Israel*, Eze 36:37; and all his promises for the collation of good things must be interpreted, with a supposition of people's seeking them at his hand; as also that every lazy, cold, formal praying will not obtain them at the hand of God, but the working, fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much. His design in these verses seemeth to be, to let us know, that fervent and importunate prayer will not prevail with God to give us any thing but what shall be good for

us; for he knoweth that the general desire of our souls is for nothing but what is good; if we ask for things hurtful, it is but a lapse or miscarriage of our tongues, caused from the blindness and ignorance of our minds. No man knowingly will ask any thing of another that shall do him hurt; and though our children, through their want of knowledge and judgment to discern between things that are good or evil for their bodies, may ask of us, and cry unto us, for things that are hurtful, yet we, who know that they would not ask for them if they had the use of their reason, and well knew their noxious quality, considering their circumstances, will not give them to them. So our heavenly Father, though he heareth us crying for such things as he knoweth (considering our circumstances) would be mischievous and hurtful to us, yet he will not give us any thing of that nature; and so in denying the words of our lips, he yet answereth the general scope and designs of our souls, which is to have only what is good for us. But if we ask any thing which is good and wholesome for us, and profitable unto us, in the circumstances in which we are, we may be sure that God will give them to us, as we may that an earthly parent will deny nothing to his children crying, which is in his power to give, and which he knoweth to be good for them; for the nature of all good lieth in the convenience and suitableness of the thing to the wants and necessities of the person that receiveth it. And every such thing must also be according to the will of God, according to his promise, Ps 84:11, to *withhold no good thing from them that live uprightly*. So as both God's fatherly relation, and the knowledge we have that he is a God that cannot lie nor repent, are assurances to us, that whatsoever good thing we ask we shall obtain of him, and nothing else, although we ask and cry for it. Therefore whereas Matthew saith, Mt 7:11, *How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him!* Luke saith here, *How much more shall he give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him!*

Luke 11:14

Ver. 14. The devil is here called *dumb*, from his effect upon the demoniac, in restraining the use of his tongue.

Luke 11:15

Ver. 15-23. See Poole on "Mt 9:34". See Poole on "Mt 12:24", and following verses to Mt 12:30. See Poole on "Mr 3:22", and following verses to Mr 3:27.

Luke 11:23

Ver. 43. See Poole on "Mt 23:6", See Poole on "Mt 23:7". Their fault was not in their taking them, but in their affecting them, and in being ambitious of them. God is the God of order, and we are bound to give honour to whom honour belongs; but pride and ambition are detestable sins, especially in such as should be teachers of humility, and the vanity of all things below.

Luke 11:24

Ver. 24-26. See Poole on "Mt 12:43", See Poole on "Mt 12:44" and See Poole on "Mt 12:45". From these verses we may observe,

1. That the devil may in some sort and degree be cast out of persons and places, while yet in other respects they may be his house, and he may dwell in and amongst them. Their bodies, their country, may be in great measure delivered from his power, and he may yet keep possession of their souls. This ordinarily happeneth in places where the gospel is faithfully preached; though there remain abundance of men whose lives evidence that the devil hath a too great possession of their souls, yet those places, and persons inhabiting in them, are more freed from witchcraft, and the power which the devil exercises (by God's

permission) upon men's and women's bodies, and cattle, &c., than other more paganish and ignorant places. He may also in a sense be said to be cast out of persons that are reclaimed from vicious and debauched lives, yet are not brought home to God, only are more enlightened, and more under the power of restraining grace; yet their souls may be his house.

2. The devil, cast out in any degree, is unquiet till (if possible) he hath recovered as full a power over and possession of men and women as he ever had.
3. If he ever recovers it, their latter end is worse than their beginning, Heb 6:4 10:26 2Pe 2:20.

Luke 11:27

Ver. 27,28. We are very prone to bless persons from external privileges, and the favours of Divine Providence, which do not at all change or affect the hearts of those to whom they are given; but God looketh with another eye upon persons. Christ doth not here deny his mother to have been blessed; her cousin Elisabeth (Lu 1:42) had pronounced her *blessed amongst women*, and the angel had before called her *highly favoured*, and told her that she had *found favour with God*. But our Saviour here declareth that her blessing did not so much lie in that her womb bare, and her paps gave suck to him, as in that she was one who heard and kept the word of God; for he pronounces all such as did so principally blessed. Nor must we separate what God hath put together; the blessing is not pronounced to those who barely hear the word of God, the blessed and the unblessed *pariter adeunt, pariter audiunt*, they may go to church together, and hear the word together, but the blessing is to *those that hear the word of God, and keep it*. See Jas 1:22,23. The word to some that hear it may be *a savour of death unto death*. The soul that through grace is made obedient to the will of God, is a more happy soul than the virgin Mary was, considered merely as the mother of Christ, without the consideration of her faith and holiness.

Luke 11:29

Ver. 29-32. See Poole on "Mt 12:38", and following verses to Mt 12:42. Matthew saith, they were the Pharisees that came to him, desiring to see a sign from heaven: they did the same again, Mt 16:1. Christ was very ready to work miracles to encourage and confirm his hearers' faith, but not to satisfy unbelievers' curiosity. Instead therefore of showing them signs from heaven, he denounces the just judgment of God against them, for their not believing in him. See further the notes upon the aforementioned parallel texts.

Luke 11:33

Ver. 33. We met with this similitude Lu 8:16 Mt 5:15: See Poole on "Lu 8:16", See Poole on "Mt 5:15". It was a kind of proverbial speech, and so applicable to divers subjects. Some think that our Saviour bringeth in these words as a reason why he would show the Pharisees no sign, viz. because he knew it would do them no good, it had been like the lighting of a candle and putting it under a bushel, which no man doth. Others think that by it he designs to give an account why he pronounced those blessed who heard the word and did it, Lu 11:28, because practice, and giving light to others, is the end of all hearing.

Luke 11:34

Ver. 34-36. See Poole on "Mt 6:22", See Poole on "Mt 6:23". Our Saviour's speech in these verses is plainly both elliptical (something being in itself to be understood) and also metaphorical. The sense is this, What the eye is to the body, that the soul, the mind and affections, are to the whole man. Now look, as the eye is the organ by which light is received to guide a man's steps, so that if that be perfect, without any mixture of ill humours, &c., the body from it takes a full and right direction how to move and act; but if that be vitiated by ill humours, the man knows not

how to direct his bodily steps: so if a man's soul, (which answereth the bodily eye), more especially a man's understanding or judgment, be darkened, perverted, prejudiced, or his affections be debauched or depraved, he will not know how to move one step right in his duty; but if his understanding have a right notion of truths, and he judgeth aright concerning the things and ways of God, and his affections be not depraved, then the whole man will be in a capacity to receive the light and revelations of truth, as they shall be communicated to him, even as he who hath a perfect eye receiveth and is able to make use of the bright shining of a candle.

Luke 11:37

Ver. 37. This is the second time we meet with our Saviour at a Pharisee's house. He saith of himself, that he *came eating and drinking*, that is, allowing himself a free, though innocent, converse with all sorts of people, that he might gain some. The Pharisees were, as to the generality of them, the most bitter, stubborn, and implacable enemies Christ had, yet he refused not to go and sit at meat with a Pharisee.

Luke 11:38

Ver. 38. Mt 15:2, the Pharisees quarrelled with the disciples upon this account; here this Pharisee is offended at Christ himself. Mark gives us the reason of it, Mr 7:3, *For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.* Concerning this tradition of theirs, and the ground of it, See Poole on "Mt 15:2", See Poole on "Mr 7:3". We would all be infallible, and therefore cannot allow others to differ from us in a rite, which hath no foundation in God's word, and wonder at those who cannot see with our eyes, nor practise according to our latitudes.

Luke 11:39

Ver. 39,40. We have much the same, though delivered in another form, with a denunciation of a woe, See Poole on "Mt 23:25". We must not imagine that our Saviour here reflects upon the cleansing of vessels in which we put our meat and drink, for undoubtedly, as to them, the Pharisees washed both the inside and the outside. And the conceit of them is amiss who think that by the *inward part*, Lu 11:39, he means the meat in their dishes, which was gotten indeed by ravening, and wickedness, extortion, &c.; for it is a hard interpretation of the inward part of the platter, to say, by it is meant the meat in the platter; but neither doth our Saviour say, the inward part of the dish, but *your inward part*, by which he plainly means the soul. Our Saviour doth therefore certainly compare the Pharisees to dishes or platters washed or scoured only on the outside, and blames their hypocrisy in this, that they were mighty solicitous about an outside purity and cleanness, but for the inward purity of the heart and soul, they took no care at all about that; they were very scrupulous about undefiled hands, but nothing at all about having their souls and inward powers and affections undefiled. This he telleth them was most egregious folly, for God, that made the body, made the soul also, and therefore would exact a purity in the inward as well as the outward man, especially considering that he loveth truth in the inward parts.

Luke 11:41

Ver. 41. πλην τα ενοντα δοτε ελεημοσυνην. The word ενοντα being a word not ordinarily used in a sense which will fit this place, hath made a great abounding in their own senses amongst interpreters; some translating it, Give such things as are within for alms; others, such things as you have; others, such things as are necessary; others, such things as ye are able, as if κατα were to be understood before τα ενοντα, according to what you have. Others, what things remain, after the serving your own necessities, and a just restitution to those whom you have wronged. Others think it is but a connexion of our Saviour's speech, and the sense is, Moreover there is but one thing to be done, Give alms, &c., as if it were το ενον I do not see but our own translation is as good as any, and κατα seems to be understood in the Greek. According to what you have, which is truly and justly your own, not theirs whom you have wronged, nor your creditors', nor your families', for their necessities; give alms of all that.

And, behold, all things are clean unto you. Not, your souls are clean; though that must first be, yet our Saviour is not here directing that, or the means and methods for it; but *all things are clean to you,* you may lawfully and without guilt use them: *Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure,* Tit 1:15. Our Saviour's words are a plain exhortation to repentance, that lieth in the change of our minds; and that inward change of our minds must be evidenced by the change of our actions, and particularly by a restitution in case of wrong done to any. The Pharisees were a covetous, rapacious generation, full of extortion, devouring widows' houses, &c. Their repentance was to be evidenced by contrary works; those were works of justice and mercy. God calleth to the Israelites for the first, Isa 1:16,17. Christ calls to the Pharisees for the latter. Such works of mercy as might evidence their hearts to be truly changed: and then, saith our Saviour, all things will be clean to you, which otherwise will not be with all your traditional superstitious washings. And needs it must be so, for no soul can repent truly without the influence and assistance of Divine grace, which God giveth not, but to those souls which are washed with the blood of Christ. So that before a soul can produce the fruits of true repentance, it must be justified by faith, and sanctified by the Spirit of holiness. Or if we understand it only of that repentance which an unjustified soul may have, yet even that may so far profit, as to have our outward things so blessed to us, that we may use them without any pollution or guilt, and have them outwardly blest to us.

Luke 11:42

Ver. 42. See Poole on "Mt 23:23". There are two great notes of hypocrites:

1. To be more exact, in and zealous for the observation of rituals and the traditions of men, than in and for the observation of the moral law of God.
2. In matters of morality, to be more exact and strict in and for little things, than for things more grave and weighty.

There is no commandment of God so little as we may neglect, or despise,

or disobey it; but yet there is a difference in duties, and we ought to have more regard to the greater than to the lesser.

Luke 11:43

Ver. 43. See Poole on "Mt 23:6", See Poole on "Mt 23:7". Their fault was not in their taking them, but in their affecting them, and in being ambitious of them. God is the God of order, and we are bound to give honour to whom honour belongs; but pride and ambition are detestable sins, especially in such as should be teachers of humility, and the vanity of all things below.

Luke 11:44

Ver. 44. See Poole on "Mt 23:27", where our Saviour compares the Pharisees to whited sepulchres: here he compares them to sepulchres, but not as there to denote their hypocrisy, appearing white, but having nothing within but rottenness; but upon the account of the contagion of them, and their pollution of others that were not aware of them. To understand our Saviour, we must consider the Levitical law, Nu 19:16; where we shall find that not only he that touched a dead body, but he that touched a grave, was legally unclean for seven days. Christ here alludes to that, though he be speaking not of legal, but moral uncleanness. By reason of the law afore mentioned, the Jews took care to whiten their graves, that people might see them, and avoid that danger. To such whited sepulchres Christ compares the Pharisees, Mt 23:27. But some graves might not be whited, or the colour washed off, so as they did not appear, and men could not be aware of them, but ran into a pollution by them. To such graves he in this place compares them. They were men that externally appeared not to be what they were. The Jews took the Pharisees' for great saints, (the strictest sect of their religion), so strict they were in their duties to their traditions, &c.; which external severity and formal behaviour covered their extortion, and covetousness, and malice, and erroneous opinions, so as people did not suspect them of any such guilt.

Luke 11:45

Ver. 45. This lawyer was a scribe of the law, Lu 11:44. The work of these men was to interpret the law; the Pharisees strictly observed their decrees and interpretations. The lawyer therefore spake rightly in thinking our Saviour's words had some reflection upon men of his order, but he woefully erred both in thinking his own order was unblamable, and also in calling our Lord's just reproof a reproaching them. But by this he gives an occasion to him, who used rightly to divide the word of God, and to give every one their portion out of it, to let them know wherein they were faulty, as well as the Pharisees.

Luke 11:46

Ver. 46. See Poole on "Mt 23:4".

Luke 11:47

Ver. 47-51. See Poole on "Mt 23:29" and following verses to Mt 23:36. The Pharisees, like a company of wretched hypocrites, under a pretence of their honouring the memories of the prophets under the Old Testament, took great care to repair and to adorn their sepulchres, while in the mean time their hearts were as full of malice against the truth, and against Christ and those who came to reveal God's will to them, as ever were their fathers against the prophets; and, saith our Saviour, I, who am the Wisdom of God, tell you, that I shall send you apostles, and prophets, and some of them you shall kill, others you shall persecute; that all the righteous blood that hath been shed on the earth, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, may come on you; which mind being in you, the same as in your persecuting predecessors, your building and adorning the old prophets' tombs is not (as you would have it thought) any testimony of your honour to the prophets, but rather to your fathers that killed them, a kind of trophy for the victory your fathers got over the prophets of the Lord; so as by that act you give a testimony that you own them as your fathers who killed the prophets, and glory in what they did, for if you truly honoured their memory, you would not retain the same malicious, bloody mind. It is gross hypocrisy for men to magnify the servants of God in

former ages, and in the mean time to malign and persecute the servants of the same God in a present age, owning but the same truths, and living up to the same rule. See Poole on "Mt 23:29", and following verses to Mt 23:36, where the same things are said with larger circumstances. They truly honour martyrs, that live the same lives they did, and adhere to the same truths of God, in a testimony to which they died.

Luke 11:52

Ver. 52. Matthew saith, Mt 23:13, *for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, &c.* I take the sense of these words to be, You have taken away knowledge, which is the key by which men enter into the kingdom of God. Though knowledge itself be but a common gift, and men may have great measures of it, and yet perish for ever, 1Co 13:2, yet it is the foundation of all saving grace. *How shall they believe in him of whom, they have not heard? Ro 10:14.* So, how shall they obey a rule they do not know, or repent of those sins which they do not know to be so? So as those that are the hinderers of people's coming to the knowledge of the will of God, are the vilest instruments upon earth in hindering men's and women's salvation. The papists are highly guilty of this, in keeping their laity from the Scriptures in a language intelligible to them. But how were the scribes guilty of this? The Jews were never hindered from reading or hearing of the law; it was read in their synagogues every sabbath day. But we must know that knowledge is highly advantaged by an interpretation of the mind and will of God. But how did the scribes take away this? They preached and interpreted the law of God.

Answer. They gave not the true sense of it, but so preached that people were scarce any whit the wiser, as to the knowledge of the law of God, only they made people understand their traditions and ceremonies: their doctrines were the traditions of men. Now they occupying the places of teachers, and no better discharging their work, instead of giving, took away knowledge from them, and proved blind leaders of the blind. Whoever they are that arrogate to themselves the office of teaching, and

supplying the places of teachers, and either do not make preaching, and instruction of the people under their charge, their business, or who preach in styles and methods their people understand not, or who preach other things than what they prove to be the revealed will of God, fall deeply under the condemnation of this text. See Poole on "Mt 23:13".

Luke 11:53

Ver. 53,54. Herein the vile genius of these wretched men was seen, Christ was become their enemy because he told them the truth; his reproofs in order to their reformation and amendment do but fill them with madness against him. Nor are wicked and malicious men at any time fair enemies.

They urge him vehemently, and provoke him to speak of many things; they lie at the catch, in wait for him; hoping that in his many words, and answers to their many captious questions, they should hear something from him, upon which they might form an accusation against him to Pilate, the Roman governor, for his blood was that they thirsted after. If it were thus done to the green tree, let us not wonder if it be so done also to the dry. The hearts and practices of malicious and wicked men, in succeeding generations, do (as in a glass) answer the hearts of persons of their spirits and morals in preceding generations. Malice will never regard justice or equity.

Luke 12:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 12:1-12 Christ teacheth his disciples to avoid hypocrisy, and not to be fearful in publishing his doctrine.

Lu 12:13-21 He refuseth to be judge in a civil cause, and warns the people to beware of covetousness by the parable of a rich man, who boasted himself in his multiplied stores.

Lu 12:22-32 He exhorteth, not to be over anxious about the provisions of this life; but to seek the kingdom

of God,

Lu 12:33,34 to lay up treasure in heaven by giving alms,

Lu 12:35-40 and to be always ready against our Lord's coming.

Lu 12:41-48 By the parable of a good and a wicked steward he showeth the duty of his ministers in particular.

Lu 12:49-53 He foretells the divisions on account of the gospel,

Lu 12:54-56 reproveth the people for not discerning the times,

Lu 12:57-59 and showeth the danger of neglecting the means of reconciliation offered them.

Ver. 1. We read of such a caution given to the disciples, Mt 16:6. But that is not the same caution with this; there he compared their doctrine to leaven, for the aptness of it to infect others; here he compares their lives to the same thing, and for the same reason: this appeareth to be the same sense of our Saviour here, because he saith their leaven is hypocrisy. There are none so like to do mischief to the better sort of people, as those that, under a mask and exterior disguise of severity and strictness, indulge themselves in corrupt affections and vicious inclinations.

Luke 12:2

Ver. 2. It is a proverbial expression: those, and parabolical expressions, may be applied in several cases, and to several subjects: we have met with this before variously applied, Mt 10:26 Mr 4:22; and in this Gospel, Lu 8:17. Here it is applied as an argument against hypocrisy, or the concealing of naughty and corrupt hearts under the vizard and disguise of demure looks, or fair conversation. In the day of judgment sinners shall walk naked, and men shall see their shame; God will in that day make known all the secrets of men's hearts, to be sure the secrets of all their hearts, whose iniquities are not forgiven, and whose sins are not covered.

Luke 12:3

Ver. 3. We have something very like this Mt 10:27, spoken by way of precept. It seemeth to be a sentence also variously applied: it may be left indifferent to the reader, whether he will understand it as a promise of the publication of the gospel, (to which purpose it seems to be spoken in the form of a precept, Mt 10:27), or as a further enlargement of his former discourse, Lu 12:2.

Luke 12:4

Ver. 4,5. See Poole on "Mt 10:28", where we met with the same. In Lu 12:5-13 our Saviour arms his disciples to encounter those storms of persecution which he knew they would meet with after he should be taken up into heaven. Here are two arguments in this verse:

1. The one drawn from the impotency, or limited power, of the most malicious enemies; they can *kill the body*, but can do no more.
2. From the mighty power of God, who can *cast us into hell*. Matthew saith, who can cast body and soul into hell fire:

whence is evident:

1. That there are punishments beyond this life; all men's punishments will not end with the killing of their bodies.
2. That men have souls as well as bodies, and both souls and bodies of sinners will in the resurrection be made capable of eternal punishment.
3. That the ready way to bring us under that misery, is to be more afraid of the wrath of men than of the wrath of God.

Luke 12:6

Ver. 6,7. See Poole on "Mt 10:29", and following verses to Mt 10:31. Our Saviour's third argument is brought from the providence of God, both his general providence, upholding the beings of all his creatures, so that he

forgetteth not a sparrow, though a creature of so minute a value, that *two* of them *are sold for a farthing*, as Matthew saith, or *five for two farthings*, as Luke saith; yea, he so remembereth them, that one of them falls not to the ground without his knowledge and leave, saith Matthew. But besides this, God exerciseth a more special providence towards creatures, with reference to their dignity and excellency. Now, (saith our Saviour), *you are of more value than many sparrows*; you are so as men, you are more so as my disciples, especially as my ministers and ambassadors.

The very hairs of your head are numbered; God will regard your most minute concerns.

Luke 12:8

Ver. 8,9. See Poole on "Mt 10:32", See Poole on "Mt 10:33". Here is a fourth and fifth argument, drawn from the rewards and punishments of such as shall confess or deny Christ before men. Confession here signifies, the owning and adhering to the truths and ways of God in a time of opposition: the reward promised is, Christ's owning those that do it at the day of judgment; *before the Father*, saith Matthew; *before the angels*, saith Luke. Christ hath no need of our owning him, his truth and ways; we may by it be profitable to ourselves, but not to him: we shall have need in the day of judgment of Christ's owning us. By the denial of Christ, is meant our apostasy from the truths or ways of God, the denial of his truths, ways, or interest in this world: it implies a persecuting of them, but signifieth something much less, a denial by words, or a forsaking and not adhering to them. The punishment will be Christ's denial of us in the day of judgment. What that signifieth Matthew tells us, Mt 7:23, *I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, I know you not, ye that work iniquity. And, he shall say to them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting, fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, Mt 25:41.* This must be understood not of such as deny him, as Peter did, in an hour of great temptation, and then go out and weep bitterly, and again return unto him, but of such as persist in such denials, and return not to confess him.

Luke 12:10

Ver. 10. See Poole on "Mt 12:31". See Poole on "Mr 3:28". See Poole on "Mr 3:29".

Luke 12:11

Ver. 11,12. See Poole on "Mt 10:19", See Poole on "Mt 10:20", See Poole on "Mr 13:11".

Luke 12:13

Ver. 13,14. This passage certainly is not recorded for nothing; if it teacheth us any thing, it is this, That matters of civil justice belong not to those whom Christ sends to preach his gospel: that work is enough for them. Christ here refuseth the office so much as of an arbitrator. A very learned author tells us, that the practice of bringing civil matters before ecclesiastical men, as judges, began in the captivity of Babylon, the Jews by that means avoiding the bringing their differences before pagan judges, which the apostle also persuadeth at large to the primitive Christians, in 1Co 6:1,2, &c. But that the ministers of the gospel should be employed, or might be employed, in them, doth not appear by the apostle; nay, he speaks the contrary, 1Co 6:4, *Set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church*: these surely were not the elders in it. Under the Romans, the Jews had more liberty, having civil courts made up of persons of their own religion, to whom our Saviour turns over this man; being not willing to move out of his calling, as a minister of the gospel. As Christ's commissioners, it is most certain that no ministers of the gospel can intermeddle in civil judgments; whether those who are such commissioners of Christ may yet as men's commissioners act, it stands those in hand who are ambitious of such an employment, and can find leisure enough for it, and are called to it, to inquire: I shall not intermeddle in that controversy. To me, the proper work of the gospel is work enough.

Luke 12:15

Ver. 15. The *πλεονεξία*, here translated *covetousness* immoderate desire of having of this world's goods, which discovers itself either by unrighteous acts in procuring, or uncharitable omissions for the keeping, of the things of this life. It is that *φιλαργυρία*, *love of money*, which the apostle determines to be *the root of all evil*. It is also discovered by a too much thoughtfulness what we shall eat, drink, or put on, or by the too great meltings of our hearts into our bags of gold or silver. All these come under the notion of that covetousness which is here forbidden. In short, whatsoever it is that hindereth our contentment with the portion God giveth us upon our endeavours, though it amounts to no more than food and raiment, according to the apostle's precept, 1Ti 6:8 Heb 13:5. This is what Christ warns his disciples to beware of; he gives us the reason, *for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of what he possesseth*: which is true, whether we understand by *life* the subsisting and upholding of our life, or (as *life* is often taken) for the happiness and felicity of our lives. Abundance is not necessary to uphold our lives. *Ad manum est quod sat est*, saith Seneca, Nature is content with a little. *Sudamus ad supervacanea*, (saith he), We sweat only to get superfluities. Nor will abundance protect our lives; it will not keep off an enemy, but rather tempt him; nor fence out a disease, but rather contribute to it, as engaging us in immoderate cares or labours to procure and keep it, or as exposing us to temptations to riot and debauchery, by which men's lives are often shortened. Nor doth the happiness of life lie in the abundance of what we possess. Some philosophers determined rightly, that something of this world's good is necessary to our happiness of life, but abundance is not. The poor are as merry, and many times more satisfied, more healthy, and at more ease, than those that have abundance. It is a golden sentence, which deserves to be engraven in every soul.

Luke 12:16

Ver. 16-21. The evangelist lets us know, that these verses contain not a narrative of a matter of fact, but only a representation of something that is too ordinary, by a fictitious story. The scope of it is to justify what our Saviour had said in the verse immediately preceding, that a man's life lieth not in the abundance of what he possesseth; for he who hath the greatest

possessions may die as soon as he who hath not where to lay down his head, and may be taken away at a time when he is enjoying the fullest satisfactions that he can promise himself, or the creature can afford him. Therefore he acts not like a wise and rational man, that takes care to lay up for himself treasure on earth, and in the mean time neglects the riches of grace. The sense of the parable is to be learned from the *επι παραβολη*, which we have Lu 12:21, *So is he that layeth up treasure for himself; so foolish and unwise is he, &c.* But from this parable we may make general observations:

1. That God maketh his sun to shine and his rain to fall on the just and on the unjust. Men may have laid up much earthly treasure, who are yet very poor towards God.
2. That the increase of riches increaseth care. The rich man saith, *What shall I do?* The difference between the beggar and the rich man is but this: both are saying, "What shall I do?" The beggar saith, "What shall I do to get money?" The other saith, "What shall I do with it now I have it?"
3. Worldly men's fruits are their goods, Lu 12:3; they are so in their estimation, and they are so as they are the whole portion that such should have from God.
4. Great estates and enjoyments of this life have a very enticing quality in them.
 - a) They make us loath to die, and willing to think we shall live many years.
 - b) They entice us to a spiritual sloth and security, and to sing a requiem to our souls.
 - c) They entice us to sinful mirth and luxury; *Eat, drink, and be merry.*
5. He that hath most may have his soul taken from him in a night.
6. A man is no longer owner of the goods of this life, than he can keep an earthly possession of them.

7. When he dies, he knoweth not whose those things shall be; not whether his son or strangers shall inherit them; nor, if his son doth happen to meet with the countenance of the law, doth he know whether that son shall be a wise man or a fool.
8. Hence it appears to be the most egregious folly imaginable, for men to spend their time and strength in getting and laying up treasure upon earth, in the mean time neglecting, or not duly endeavouring, to be rich towards God; both:
 - a) In that grace by which the soul is justified and accepted; and also,
 - b) In that grace in the exercise of which alone he may glorify God.

This latter is that which the apostle calls, a being *rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, &c.*, 1Ti 6:18; where he mentions only one species of good works. For whereas wisdom lies in the choice of the best end, and then of the best means to obtain it, and the best circumstances in the use of those means, the worldly man failing in the first, not choosing the best end, must needs be a spiritual fool. And indeed, of all folly that is the greatest which is seen in the choice of a worse and more ignoble end, before that which is of more advantage, more noble, and excellent; as certainly the acquiring of an eternal happiness and felicity is before an acquiring a mere transitory and uncertain felicity and satisfaction.

Luke 12:22

Ver. 22-30. See Poole on "Mt 6:25", and following verses to Mt 6:32, where we before met with all that is here. The thoughtfulness here forbidden is not moderate, prudent thoughtfulness, or care; but,

1. A distrustful thoughtfulness;
2. Distracting or dividing cares, such as make a man live in suspense, and to be wavering as a meteor, μη μετεωρίζεσθε; or,
3. A thoughtfulness for high things, as some interpret that word; but possibly it better signifies such a thoughtfulness to be forbidden, as keeps the mind of man from rest, in a continual motion and fluctuation; or:
4. Any such thoughtfulness as is inconsistent with our seeking first the kingdom of God.

Against this thoughtfulness our Lord arms his disciples with the consideration:

1. Of their dependence on God necessarily for their lives, which are better than meat and raiment, Lu 12:23.
2. Of the providence of God, which extending to all orders of creatures, particularly to such as merely have life, (such are vegetables, the grass and flowers), and such as have only life and sense, (such are the ravens), it cannot be reasonably presumed that it will be wanting to men, who are the most noble order of sublunary creatures, having being, life, sense, and reason (which is the image of God in man).
3. From the consideration of the vanity of this care, by which we cannot contribute a cubit to our stature.
4. From the consideration that the heathens make these things their care, whom Christians ought to excel, as knowing more, and living under more excellent hopes and promises than they have. Lastly, From the consideration of their relation to God as a Father, and their Father's knowing what they have need of, of whom therefore it were unreasonable to presume, that he should suffer them to want what is necessary for his children. See more in the notes before mentioned.

Luke 12:31

Ver. 31. Matthew saith, *seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added, &c.* The particle *πλην* prefixed here to *ζητειτε*, (which we translate *rather seek*), doth expound Matthew's *πρωτον*, *seek first*, and likewise expounds our Saviour's meaning, when he said. Take no thought, what ye should eat, &c.; that is, let not those be your only or principal thoughts, *quin etiam, tantum maxime*, but also, and mostly, or chiefly, *seek ye the kingdom of God*, that kingdom mentioned in the next verse, *and all these things shall be added to you*; either an affluence of them; or a sufficiency of them, with a contented, satisfied mind. See Poole on "Mt 6:33".

Luke 12:32

Ver. 32. Our Saviour had mentioned a kingdom, Lu 12:31. How much too big a thought was this for fishermen, and others of his poor hearers, to entertain! He therefore here assures them of the thing, that they should have a kingdom, and showeth them that their title to it was his and their Father's will; though they were a little flock, and so not likely to conquer a kingdom upon earth for themselves, yet they should have a kingdom from the free donation of him, who had kingdoms to give, and would give it to them, because he was their Father. By this kingdom can be understood nothing else but that state of honour, glory, and dignity which believers shall have in the world that is to come; which they shall have not from merit, but gift; not from the first good motions and inclinations of their own will, but from the free motions of the Divine will; and therefore they had no reason to fear that God would not provide food convenient for them. He that had provided a kingdom for them, which he would one day give unto them, would certainly provide bread for them, and give it to them.

Luke 12:33

Ver. 33,34. The immutable purpose of the Divine Being to glorify the disciples of Christ, the freedom of the Divine will in the gift of heaven and glory, are neither of them exclusive of, but include and suppose, their duty to use such due means as he hath directed them, in the use of which they shall obtain what he hath purposed for them, and promised to them; some of which are here directed and prescribed.

Sell that ye have, and give alms, &c. It is a precept of the same import with that, Mt 19:21 Mr 10:21. Though possibly the precept here given to the disciples of Christ generally is not to be interpreted so strictly as seemeth to be our Saviour's meaning in those texts, as to the young man. For it seems to have been a special precept to him, laying an obligation upon him to make a present actual sale of all he had, and it is plain that he so understood it. To this Christians are not obliged generally by this precept: but to be ready at the call and command of God to part with all, for such uses as God should show them: not to set their heart on riches, Ps 62:10; to be *ready to distribute*, and *willing to communicate*, 1Ti 6:18; remembering that God loveth mercy rather than sacrifice, Ho 6:6 Mt 9:13. To give of our superfluities, Lu 3:11. To *make friends* of our *mammon of unrighteousness*, Lu 16:9. Nay, if the necessities of the people of God be such as requires it, for the subsistence of Christians, to sell what we have, rather than others of God's people should starve, calling nothing our own in such a case; which Christians did in the primitive state of the church, Ac 4:34-37. For the other part of Lu 12:33,34, See Poole on "Mt 6:20", and See Poole on "Mt 6:21".

Luke 12:35

Ver. 35,36. The first words of Lu 12:40, *Be ye therefore ready also*, expound Lu 12:35. In this sense we find the phrase used, 1Ki 18:46 2Ki 4:29 9:1 Job 38:3 40:7 Jer 1:17. In those Eastern countries both masters and servants were wont to wear long garments, which they were wont to gird up, either when they went to fight, or when they were to travel, Ex

12:11 1Ki 18:46; or when they went about any service; see Lu 17:8 Joh 13:4: this was a piece of their preparation. We read of the girding about of the loins of the mind with truth, Eph 6:14, and with habits of grace and virtue; 1Pe 1:13, *Wherefore gird up the loins of your minds, be sober, and hope to the end*. The other phrase, *and your lights burning*, is of the same import, relating to the Lord's coming from the wedding, mentioned Lu 12:36; for in those countries their weddings were celebrated in the night. Christ's coming to judgment, whether our particular or the more general judgment, is that which is here set out to us, under the notion of a man's coming home late at night from a wedding. Nor improperly, for in this life souls are united to Christ, Eph 5:32. When Christ shall have done his work of that nature upon the earth, that all the elect shall be gathered, then shall he come to judge the world. He would have all his people be ready for that day, and waiting for their Lord, that his coming may be welcome to them.

Luke 12:37

Ver. 37-40. The duty which Christ is here pressing upon his hearers is watchfulness, which signifieth:

1. A negation of sleep;
2. An industrious keeping ourselves awake with reference to some particular end. The end here expressed is the happy receiving of Christ, coming to judgment; from whence is evident, that the watching here intended is a spiritual watching, which is a denial of ourselves as to our lusts, and the sleep of sin, which is compared to sleep, Ro 13:11 Eph 5:14, and an industrious keeping ourselves from such sleep in order to the coming of our Lord, who will come at an hour when we think not, Lu 12:40; his coming is to us uncertain, and will be to many surprising.

This watchfulness he presseth upon his hearers;

1. From the reward the Lord will give to such persons: *He shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them*: very high metaphorical expressions, signifying no more, than that he will put upon them a very high honour and dignity, and

satisfy them with a fulness of happiness and glory, and they shall be at rest for ever. The state of glory is elsewhere set out under the notion of drinking new wine in the kingdom of God, and eating and drinking in his kingdom.

2. From the benefit which they will have by watching in this; that let the Lord come when he will, whether in the second or third watch, they will be ready, and they shall be blessed.
3. He presseth it also from the ordinary prudence of men, who if they have an intimation that a thief is coming, will watch, and prevent the mischief that might ensue by the breaking open of their houses. But concerning those words;

See Poole on "Mt 24:43", See Poole on "Mt 24:44", where we met with them before used upon the same occasion.

Luke 12:41

Ver. 41-48. See Poole on "Mt 24:45" and following verses to Mt 24:51, where we met with the same parable, but here expressed more largely, and with more circumstances. Matthew hath not the introduction to it which we have here, Lu 12:41.

It was occasioned from Peter's saying to Christ, *Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or unto all?* Doth this duty of watchfulness concern all thy disciples, or only us, that are thine apostles, the ministers of thy gospel? The substance of what our Lord saith in answer to Peter, from Lu 12:42-48, is, Peter, I spake it to all, I have not the meanest hearer but is concerned to watch against my coming; but you that are ministers of my gospel are most eminently concerned. Others are concerned, upon the pain of eternal damnation, to have the loins of their understandings girt about with truth, the loins of their minds girt with sobriety and hope, to have their lights burning, to be every way and always ready, watching against sin, abstaining from it, and industriously keeping themselves from any

obedience to their lusts, in a prospect of my coming to judgment. But you that are to be ministers are more highly concerned than others. You are the rulers of my household, the stewards of my mysteries, 1Co 4:1; your work is to give the rest of my people *their portion of meat in due season*; if you faithfully do this, you shall be blessed, holding on in doing of it to your lives end, so as your Lord find you so doing. But if any of you shall be found, who out of any atheistical principles, not in heart believing what you preach to others, but saying, either that I will not come, or not so soon but you may sleep awhile, and wake time enough to prepare for my coming; if they who should be examples to my flock, and are the rulers over them, shall give reins to their lusts, and eat with the gluttons, and drink with the drunkards; if they who should feed my flock, shall fail to the worrying of it, instead of feeding, beating my men servants and maidens; the Lord will not spare them long, but be upon them before they are aware, και διχοτομησει, and cut them to pieces, (the word signifies to divide into two parts), as those nations were wont to serve the vilest transgressors, traitors, and rebels, and violaters of their covenants; they shall be most severely dealt withal, Lu 12:47, they *shall be beaten with many stripes*, because they knew their Master's will, and did it not. Ignorance of the Divine will not wholly excuse the sinner, he shall be beaten, but his stripes shall be few, his damnation shall be gentle compared with a minister's, that knows his Master's will, but doth it not; teacheth it to others, but doth it not himself. Our Saviour further tells them, that this just judgment of God upon lewd and scandalous ministers, is justified by the ordinary practice of men, who require much where they give much, and ask milch of those to whom they have committed great trusts. God looks upon wicked, loose, and scandalous and mischievous ministers as the greatest transgressors, and he will deal with them as such. There will be degrees in the punishment as well as in the rewards of another life. Such persons as have taken upon them to be the rulers of Christ's household, the stewards of his mysteries, if they be vile and wicked, if they be not faithful in giving the servants of Christ's household their portion in its season, must expect the deepest place in the bottomless pit: they know more than others, they have more committed to their trust than others, their examples do more harm than others, their sins are greater than others, and the fiery furnace will for them be heated over seven times.

Luke 12:49

Ver. 49. Some of the ancients here by *fire* understood the Holy Ghost, or the preaching of the gospel, with those flames of love and holy affections which that causeth in the hearts of good people; but this interpretation cannot but be looked upon as strained to those who compare this verse with Lu 12:51-53, and the parallel text in Mt 10:34-36. By *fire* here therefore is to be understood the dissension or *division* mentioned Lu 12:51, with all those persecutions, wars, &c. which are the effects of it. A prediction or threatening of persecutions or wars, or any kind of troubled state of things, is often expressed in holy writ under the notion of fire, and water, or a flood, for though fire and water are opposite in their qualities, yet they both agree in the common effect of consumption, wasting, and desolation. Christ saith he came to send it, because he foresaw this would be a certain consequent, though not a proper and natural effect, of the preaching of the gospel. Christ may be said to come to send a fire, in the same sense as he that is employed in the removal of a filthy dunghill may be said to come to send a stench; his design is to carry the muck away, and in due time he will have done it, but in the mean time it sends out a much greater stench than before it was stirred.

And what will I, if it be already kindled? Not to take notice of what critical authors say about the signification of the particles or the phrase here used, I take the true sense to be, I desire nothing more than that it were already kindled; nor was this any more inconsistent with the goodness and holiness of Christ, than for a goldsmith to wish the fire was kindled that should separate the dross from the pure metal, or than for Christ to desire that his floor were thoroughly purged. Christ doth not desire the fire for the fire's sake, but for the sake of that effect it would have, in separating in his church the good from the bad; it was a thing he saw would be through the opposition the world would give to the preaching of the gospel, before his gospel would obtain in the world; I would, saith he, that what they do they would do quickly, that they would spit their venom, that my Father might

make their wrath to praise him. Whereas some interpret it indicatively, as if the fire were already begun, εἰ ἤδη ἀνῆαφη can hardly be so interpreted.

Luke 12:50

Ver. 50. This baptism, spoken of here by our Saviour, is the same mentioned Mt 20:22,23, and can be understood of nothing but his passion, the accomplishment of which he hints us was to be before the fire (before mentioned) would blaze up on the earth. Concerning this he saith he was *straitened till it was accomplished*: not that he willed the influencing of the heart of Judas to betray him, the heart of Pilate to condemn him, or the hearts of the wicked Jews to accuse, condemn, and crucify him; but he willed these events, for the manifestation of the glory of his Father, in the redemption of the world by him. As the woman big with child heartily wishes that the hour of her travail were come and over, not for the pain's sake, which she must endure, but for her own ease' sake, and the joy she should have of a child born into the world.

Luke 12:51

Ver. 51-53. See Poole on "Mt 10:34", See Poole on "Mt 10:35". Our Saviour in these words doth but pursue the same argument which began Lu 12:49, to show what would be the consequences of the doctrine of the gospel. And hereby they might have understood a design in our Saviour to convince them, that the business of the Messiah whom they expect was not to exercise a temporal but a spiritual kingdom and power, not to restore to their nation a civil peace, but to purchase their peace with God, and to bring them to that joy and peace which is consequent to believing. For as to the external state of things, it would be much more troubled than it was before; our Lord foresaw how tenacious both the Jews and pagans, and in succeeding ages Christians also, would be of their idolatries and superstitious rites and usages, with whom their believing relations not complying, there would be greater feuds and animosities arise than ever were before; the father would hate the son, the son the father, &c. Before the gospel came amongst the heathens, they were entirely the devil's kingdom, which is not divided against itself. But when by Christ those

who belonged to the election of grace should be separated, through the devil's rage and men's lusts, there would be continual feuds and divisions.

Luke 12:54

Ver. 54-56. We met with a discourse of the same nature; See Poole on "Mt 16:2", See Poole on "Mt 16:3". The sense of our Saviour is, that God by his prophets had given them more certain signs and revelations of the coming of the Messiah, and of the nature of his kingdom, and the effects and consequences of it, than were written in nature of any natural effects; and upbraids their stupid ignorance and unbelief, that they could give credit to and discern the latter and not the former, whereas the former were much more certain.

Luke 12:57

Ver. 57-59. Our Saviour made use of this expression, Mt 5:25,26, to persuade peace between brethren; here he useth it to persuade men to acquaint themselves with God, and be at peace. He had been treating of the last judgment; there was no fitter foundation upon which he could build all exhortation to repentance, and making our peace with God. In not doing of it, he telleth his hearers that they did not of themselves judge what was right, for if they did, they would judge themselves as much concerned to come to an agreement with God, as they did ordinarily to come to an agreement with men. Now if amongst men they had an adversary, they did not judge it prudence to stand out with him till the sentence of the judge were past, and they were imprisoned, not to come out till they had paid every farthing of the debt and charges wherein they were condemned; but to agree while they were in the way, before they came to a final judgment in the case, that so, having compounded the case, they might avoid the judgment. So in the case between God and their souls, if they judged right, they would judge that it was not their wisdom to stand out till the irrevocable sentence of condemnation was passed upon them, but *in the*

way, during the time of this life, they would make their peace with God, and reform their lives before that great and terrible day came. It is a sign the papists are at a woeful loss for arguments to prove purgatory, when they make use of this text, because it is said, *thou shalt not depart thence till thou hast paid the very last mite*, as if this text spake of a prison for souls from which there is an outlet. Such another argument will prove, from Ps 110:1, that Christ shall not sit at the right hand of his Father, because God only said to him. Sit there *until I make thine enemies thy footstool*; and that Joseph knew Mary after Christ was born, because it is said, Mt 1:25, *he knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn Son*. But we have before showed that that term, though it be exclusive of a time past, yet doth not determine a future time.

Luke 13:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 13:1-5 Christ showeth that temporal calamities are no sure signs of sinfulness, but that others should take warning by them, and repent.

Lu 13:6-9 The parable of the fig tree that was ordered to be cut down for being fruitless.

Lu 13:10-17 Christ healeth a woman that had been long bowed together, and putteth the hypocritical ruler of the synagogue to silence.

Lu 13:18,19 He likens the progress of the gospel to a grain of mustard seed,

Lu 13:20-22 and to leaven.

Lu 13:23-30 Being asked of the number of the saved, he exhorteth to strive to enter in at the strait gate,

Lu 13:31-35 He will not be diverted from his course through fear of Herod; and laments over the approaching desolation of Jerusalem.

Ver. 1-5. The Holy Scriptures giving us no account of these two stories to which our Saviour doth here refer, and those who have wrote the history of the Jews having given us no account of them, interpreters are at a great

loss to determine any thing about them. We read of one Judas of Galilee, who drew away much people after him, and perished, Ac 5:37. It is said that he seduced people from their obedience to the Roman emperor, persuading them not to acknowledge him as their governor, nor to pay tribute to the Romans. It is guessed by interpreters, that some of this faction coming up to the passover, (for they were Jews), Pilate fell upon them, and slew them while they were sacrificing. Others think that these were some remnant of Judas's faction, but Samaritans, and slain while they were sacrificing at their temple in Mount Gerizim, and that (though Samaritans) they were called Galilaeans, because Judas, the head of their faction, was such. The reader is at liberty to choose which of these he thinks most probable, for I find no other account given by any. The latter is prejudiced by our Saviour's calling them Galilaeans, and advantaged by the desperate hatred which the Jews had to the Samaritans, which might make them more prone to censure any passages of Divine providence severe towards them. But what the certain crime or provocation was we cannot say; we are sure that *de facto* the thing was true, Pilate did mingle the blood of some Galilaeans with their sacrifices, of which a report was brought to Christ. We are at the same loss for those *eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell*. Siloe, or Siloa, was the name of a small fountain at the foot of Mount Zion, which, as we are told, did not constantly, but at certain times, send out waters, which running through hollow places of the earth, and mines and quarries of stone, made a great noise. Isaiah mentions it, Isa 8:6. There was also a pool in Jerusalem which had that name, and had a wall built by it, Ne 3:15. Christ sent the blind man to go and wash there, Joh 9:7. Turrets are (as we know) very usual upon walls. It seems one of these towers fell, and slew eighteen persons, come thither either to wash themselves, or by reason of some healing virtue in those waters, upon what occasion we cannot determine; but there they perished. This story seems to have been something older than the other. Our Saviour either had heard what some people had said, or at least knew what they would say upon those accidents, for we are mightily prone to pass uncharitable judgments upon persons perishing suddenly, especially if they die by a violent death. As he therefore took all occasions to press upon them repentance, so he doth not think fit to omit one so fair; and though he doth not, by what he saith, forbid us to observe such extraordinary providences, and to whom they happen, but willeth us to hear and fear; yet he tells them, there were many Galilaeans as bad as they, who unless they repented, that is, being sensible of, heartily turned from, the wickedness of

their ways, would perish also: thereby teaching us,

1. That punishments come upon people for their sins, and more signal punishments for more signal sinnings.
2. That although God sometimes by his providence signally punishes some for notorious sinnings, yet he spareth more such sinners than he so signally punishes.
3. That therefore none can conclude from such signal punishments, that such persons punished were greater sinners than they.
4. That the best use we can make of such reports, and spectacles of notorious sinners, more than ordinarily punished, is to examine ourselves, and to repent, lest we also perish.

Luke 13:6

Ver. 6-9. This parable very fitly coheres with the preceding discourse: there he had let his hearers know, that though God spareth some sinners, and hath a longer patience with them than others, though they be every whit as great transgressors, in expectation still that they should bring forth fruit; yet if they answer not the means which God useth, with them to bring them to repentance, they shall not be spared long, but vengeance shall overtake them also. Those who think that this parable concerned not the Jews only, but all mankind, or more especially those who are in the pale of the church, judge well, provided that they allow it to have been spoken with a primary reference to that nation, amongst whom Christ had now been preaching and working miracles three years, and expected the fruits of repentance and reformation from them in vain. I do not think it any prejudice to this, that the vine dresser begged but for one year longer, whereas after this Christ had patience with them forty years, before they were destroyed; for *one year* may not be intended strictly, (though the *three years* be), but to signify some little time more, that the apostles

might use all probable means to reclaim them, and make them more fruitful. Grotius thinks the term of *three years* is used, because every fig tree (not wholly barren) brought forth fruit one year in three; which notion (if true) of that plant is valuable, but may be of ill consequence, if any should thence conclude, that men's days of grace exceed not three years: yet thus much is observable, that when God sends a faithful minister to a place, the greatest success and blessing of his ministry is within a few of his first years in a place. The parable doubtless extendeth much further than to the people of the Jews, and learns us all these lessons:

1. That where God plants any one within the pale of his church, he looks he or she should bring forth the fruits of repentance and faith.
2. That many are so planted, yet bring forth no fruit.
3. That there is a determined time beyond which God will not bear with barren souls.
4. That barren souls are not only useless, but also spoil others; την γην καταργει, they make the soil unprofitable: a quench coal spoils the fire.
5. That faithful ministers will be very earnest with God to spare even barren souls.
6. That it is their work and duty to use all probable means to make barren souls fruitful. I will *dig about it, and dung it*.
7. That bearing fruit at last will save souls from ruin and destruction.
8. That out it every soul, though standing in God's vineyard, will at last perish eternally.

Luke 13:10

Ver. 10-13. Though the Greek *be on the sabbaths*, which might signify

any day of the week, yet it is manifest by what followeth that this miracle was wrought upon the seventh day, which was the Jewish sabbath, else the ruler of the synagogue would not have quarrelled with our Saviour about it. What is meant here, Lu 13:11, by a *spirit of infirmity*, would not easily be determined, whether only a very great infirmity, or an infirmity in the bringing and continuing of which upon her the devil had a great instrumentality, but for Lu 13:16, where she is said to be one that Satan had bound; she was a cripple, and so bowed down that she could not lift up herself, and thus she had been for eighteen years, so as the distemper was inveterate, and out of the course of ordinary cure. Christ, who, as to people's bodily infirmities, was sometimes found of those that sought him not, seeing her, calleth her to him, and saith, *Woman, thou art loosed from thy infirmity. And he laid his hands on her; and immediately she was made straight.* The inveterateness of the disease, and the instantaneousness of the cure, without the use of any means, made the miracle evident. The woman for it gave thanks to God, for that is meant by *glorified God*, she spake some things to the honour and glory of God, who had healed her.

Luke 13:14

Ver. 14. *Answered* here signifies no more than, he spake, as in a multitude of other places in the Gospels. The Jews were both very superstitious and very uneven as to the sanctification of the sabbaths: superstitious, because they would not do many things which by God's law they might do, such as applying means to heal the sick, defending themselves against enemies, &c. Uneven, because they would do divers things of equal bodily labour with those things which they pretend to scruple, one of which we shall hear our Saviour by and by instancing in. This ruler studied to defame him before the people. His pretence was, this was a work, and such a work as might be done in the six days. Let us hear how our Saviour defends himself.

Luke 13:15

Ver. 15,16. Our Saviour here calleth this ruler of the synagogue *hypocrite*, for his impudence in so severe a reflection on him for doing on the sabbath day a work of that nature which he himself did, and thought himself blameless in the doing of, and his friends ordinarily did, upon whom for so working he did not reflect, thereby teaching us one note of a hypocrite, viz. to reflect upon others for things which we do ourselves. This ruler of the synagogue and his party indeed did not heal on the sabbath day. But what kind of work was healing? Was it not a work of mercy? What servile labour was there in it? It is only said Christ called this poor creature, and she came, not she was brought to him. What did Christ do? He only laid his hands upon her, and pronounced her loosed from her infirmity. Now the Jews would ordinarily upon the sabbath day loose a beast from the stall to go and drink at a pit, or lead it thither; was not this a greater labour? How came this to be lawful, and not that act of mercy which Christ did show to this poor creature? Their act was capable of no other excuse, than that it was an act of mercy, and a good man will show mercy to his beast: it could be no act of piety, nor of necessity; for a beast may live one day without water, or at least might have had water set by it the night before. Nay, our Lord's work of mercy was much more noble. Theirs was to a beast; his to one of mankind, to a woman, and she a Jewish woman, a daughter of Abraham, a father upon whom they much valued themselves, and their whole nation, Mt 3:9 Joh 8:39. Their beast might not be sick; she was under an infirmity, and that no ordinary infirmity, she was in the hands of the enemy of mankind, bound by Satan; nor was her affliction of a few days' continuance, she had been so bound eighteen years.

Luke 13:17

Ver. 17. It is one thing to be ashamed, another thing to be convinced, so as to confess an error; they were ashamed that they were so put to silence before the people, but we read of no confession of their error and mistake, and begging Christ's pardon. *The people rejoiced* and gave thanks to God *for all the glorious things that were done by our Saviour.*

Luke 13:18

Ver. 18-21. See Poole on "Mt 13:31", and following verses to Mt 13:33. They are two parables by which Christ foretells the great success of the gospel, notwithstanding the present small appearance of the efficacy of it.

Luke 13:22

Ver. 22. Still wherever we find our blessed Lord, we find him teaching, and that not by an exemplary life only, but by word of mouth. There are different opinions whether our Saviour was now journeying towards Jerusalem with respect to the passover, or some other great festival of the Jews.

Luke 13:23

Ver. 23,24. Our Saviour hath told us, Mt 7:14, that *strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth to eternal life, and few there be that find it.* Upon this this exhortation is founded. Ἀγωνιζεσθε, Contend, or strive, to enter in at this strait gate, a word which signifies a labouring against opposition, and the utmost endeavour of the mind and body: not that our own labouring will bring us thither, the eternal life is the gift of God, and without the influence of his grace we can do nothing effectually; but to let us know, that the Lord will give heaven to none but such as labour and strive for it, yea, and also *strive lawfully*: he tells us that many *will seek to enter, and shall not be able*; either seeking in a wrong way, or in an undue time. By this speech of our Saviour's he diverts them from that curious question, about the number of those that shall be saved. That was not so much their concern to know, as that they should be some of that number.

Luke 13:25

Ver. 25-27. Our Saviour in these verses doth represent himself by a man, who, having invited guests to his supper, stays till all those who were invited, and accepted the invitation, were Come in; then rising up, shuts the door; and after that is shut, turns a deaf ear to any that shall come knocking, let them plead for admittance what they can plead. By this parabolical expressing of himself, he both openeth in part what he meant by the foregoing words, *many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able*, and also lets us know, that there is a determinate time, wherein souls must (if ever) accept of the offers of grace and salvation, when they are made to them, which if they slip, they will not be able to obtain of God an entrance into the kingdom of heaven. *Seek the Lord while he may be found*, saith the prophet, Isa 55:6. *In an acceptable time have I heard thee*, saith the prophet, Isa 49:8; which the apostle applies, 2Co 6:2, to persuade men that they should not *receive the grace of God* (in the gospel) *in vain*. What this determinate time is God hath hidden from us, and it is probable that it is not the same as to all persons; we know nothing to the contrary, but while there is life there is hope, which warrants us to preach truth and repentance to all. We are also further instructed, that no outward privileges though Christ hath taught in our streets; no external acts of communion with Christ, though we can say we have ate and drunk with him; will justify our hopes of entrance into heaven, if in the mean time we be workers of iniquity. We had much the same; See Poole on "Mt 7:21", and following verses to Mt 7:23.

Luke 13:28

Ver. 28,29. We have the same Mt 8:11,12, only he saith only *from the east and west*: See Poole on "Mt 8:11", See Poole on "Mt 8:12". *Weeping and gnashing of teeth*, are usual expressions by which the pains of the damned are expressed, especially by the evangelist Matthew, Mt 8:12 Mt 13:42,50 22:13 24:51 25:30. One cause of this vexation of spirit, expressed under this notion, is the Jews' sight of the rest and happiness that their relations, nay, some to whom they upon earth were enemies, should enjoy in heaven; nay, which some which were heathens should enjoy there; whereas they, who took themselves to be the only church, and to have the same right to the kingdom of heaven that children have to the inheritances of their

fathers, should be cast out, as having no portion there.

Luke 13:30

Ver. 30. This is a sentence which our Saviour often made use of, and not always to the same purpose. See Poole on "Mt 19:30". See Poole on "Mt 20:16". See Poole on "Mr 10:31". As to the sense of them here, it is plain. Our Saviour here foretells the conversion of the Gentiles; but yet I do not take the Gentiles to be all who are intended under the notion of the *last*, but divers others also. Men who, both in their opinion of themselves, and in reality with respect to privilege, are the *first*, whether in respect of gifts, or office, or the means of grace, or profession, will many of them be the *last*, that is, furthest off from the kingdom of God; and many who are the *last*, upon these accounts will in the day of judgment be *first*, that is, appear so, as having more of the favour of God, and be so, taken to heaven, when the others shall be cast to hell, Mt 11:20-24.

Luke 13:31

Ver. 31-33. It is plain from this text, that our Saviour was at this time in Galilee, for that was the tetrarchy or province of Herod Antipas, who is the Herod here mentioned. Whether these Pharisees came of their own heads, or as sent by Herod, is not so plain, nor so well agreed by interpreters. If they came of their own heads, it is certain they came not out of kindness, for the whole history of the gospel lets us know, that the Pharisees had no kindness for Christ, but were his most implacable enemies, and continually consulting how to destroy him; but they either came to scare him out of Galilee, whose repute was so great, and who did them so much mischief there, or to drive him into the trap which they had laid for him in Judea. But it is most probable that they came as secretly sent by Herod, who though of himself he be reported to be of no bloody disposition, yet upon the Pharisees' continual solicitations might be persuaded to send them on this errand, choosing rather cunningly to scare him out of his province, than by violence to fall upon him. This opinion looks more probable, because, Lu 13:32, our Saviour sends them back with a message to Herod, *Go ye, and tell that fox.* Herod had gained himself no reputation amongst

the Jews, by his murdering John the Baptist, whom the Jews generally valued as a prophet; and probably seeing our Saviour exceeding him in popular applause, he was not willing to augment the odium which already lay upon him for that fact; yet, to gratify the Pharisees, (many of which were in his province), he was willing, if he could effect it cleverly, and without noise, to be quit of Christ, especially considering (as we before heard) he had an opinion that he was John the Baptist risen from the dead, or the soul of John the Baptist in another body; and possibly: he could not tell what might be the effect of his ghost so haunting his province. It is certain, that either he, or the Pharisees, or both, had a mind to have him gone some where else, to which purpose this message is brought to him. Our Saviour, either discerning Herod's craft in this thing, or having observed the craft he used in the whole management of his government, that he might keep favour both with the Roman emperor and with the Jews, bids them, *Go and tell that fox*. I do not much value their critical observation, who observe that it is not *αλωπεκι εχεινη*, but, *ταυτη*, that is, this fox; from whence they would observe that our Saviour might mean the Pharisees, not Herod; nor is there any need of it to excuse our Saviour from the violation of that law of God, Ex 22:28, *Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people*; which law Paul reflected on, Ac 23:5, and pleads ignorance for his calling Ananias a *whited wall*. For we shall observe that the prophets all along (being immediately sent from God) took a further liberty than any others, in severely reprovng kings and princes. Elijah tells Ahab it was he that troubled Israel; the prophets call the rulers of the Jews, *rulers of Sodom, and princes of Gomorrah, &c.* But Christ may be allowed a liberty neither lawful nor decent for other persons, not though they were prophets. But what is the message which Christ sends by these Pharisees?

Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Tell him, saith he, what I am doing; I am freeing his subjects from molestations by evil spirits, and the encumbrances of many diseases. What do I do worthy of death? I have but a little time to trouble him, for in a little time I must die, which is that which he means by being perfected: it is plain that those words *today, and tomorrow, and the third day*, must not be taken strictly, for Christ lived more than three days after this. If this will not satisfy him, tell him, saith our Saviour, that

I must walk today, and tomorrow, and the day following. I know that, as to

this thing, I am not under his command or power, *I must walk*, &c.; my days are not in his hands, and I know that he cannot kill me, *for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem*. Jerusalem is the place where I must die, not Galilee; the sanhedrim sits at Jerusalem, who alone can take cognizance of the case of false prophets, and Jerusalem is the place where the people must fill up the measure of their iniquities by spilling my blood. Upon this our Saviour breaketh out into a sad lamentation of the case of that once holy city, the praise of the whole earth.

Luke 13:34

Ver. 34-35. See Poole on "Mt 23:37". See Poole on "Mt 23:38". See Poole on "Mt 23:39". These five last verses afford us much for our instruction.

1. We may from them learn the craft of the enemies of the gospel, as well as their malice; they are lions, and will, like lions, tear and rend when they see an opportunity; but when they see it convenient, then they put on the fox's skin, doing the same thing by subtlety, which they durst not attempt to effect by cruelty.
2. Their malice is as much perspicuous; who but the children of the devil could have found in their hearts to have desired Christ to go out of their country, who did nothing there but innocently and diligently preach the gospel, deliver people from grievous diseases, and the power of Satan, who miserably possessed and tormented them?
3. When the most malicious enemies of God's people have done what they can, they shall finish their course, and work the time God hath set them.
4. When they have perfected their work, they shall be perfected. Death is but the perfecting of the saints, as it was the perfecting of Christ.
5. Men shall die, as at the time, so at the place, which God hath set.
6. God sending of his ministers faithfully to reveal his will to people, is a declaration of his willingness to gather them under the wings of his

special favour and protection.

7. The perverse wills of men are those things which hinder men and women from being gathered.
8. Temporal judgments, and that of the severest nature, will first or last follow men's contempt of the offers of grace and salvation.
9. Those that do contemn the means of grace shalt not see them long. —*Ye shall not see me.*
10. The proudest scorners and contemners of Christ and his grace shall one day wash that one would or might come unto them *in the name of the Lord*, and do but now contemn what hereafter they would be glad they might enjoy.

Luke 14:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 14:1-6 Christ healeth the dropsy on the sabbath, and justifieth his doing so.

Lu 14:7-11 He recommends humility,

Lu 14:12-14 and hospitality toward the poor.

Lu 14:15-24 The parable of the marriage supper, and of the guests, who making excuses were excluded, and their rooms filled by others.

Lu 14:25-33 He advises those who are willing to be his disciples to examine beforehand their resolution in case of persecutions.

Lu 14:34-35 The unprofitableness of salt, when it hath lost its savour.

Ver. 1-6. We have before observed the freedom of our Saviour's converse; sometimes he will dine with publicans, sometimes with Pharisees, becoming all things to all men that he might gain some. Christians certainly have the same liberty; the matter is not in whose houses we are, but what we do or say, how we behave ourselves there. In his going to a

Pharisee's house, he gives us a great precedent of humanity and self-denial, for the Pharisees were his great enemies, and we shall observe no great kindness showed to him in the invitation of him. Whether this Pharisee be called *one of the chief of the Pharisees* because he was a member of the sanhedrim, or a ruler of a synagogue, or because he was one of the eldest and greatest repute, is not worth the inquiry. Thither Christ went *to eat bread*, that is, to take a meal with him. It is a phrase often used to signify dining, or supping, for they ordinarily under the notion of bread understood all manner of victuals.

It was *on the sabbath day*. In the mean time, the evangelist tells us, *they watched him*, to wit, whether they might hear any thing from him, or see any thing in him, whereof they might accuse him.

It happened *there was a man which had the dropsy*, whether casually, or brought thither on purpose by the Pharisees, the Scripture saith not; he was not there without a Divine direction, to give Christ an occasion of a miracle, and further to instruct people in the true doctrine of the sabbath.

Christ upon the sabbath begins us a discourse proper for the day, asking the Pharisees if it were *lawful to heal on the sabbath day*. They make him no reply. Christ healeth him, then preacheth a doctrine to them, which he had twice before inculcated, in the case of a man who had a withered hand, Mt 12:10, and of the woman whom Satan had bound, of which we heard, Lu 13:11, viz. That works of mercy are lawful on the sabbath day. Then he justifieth his fact by the confession of their own practice, in lifting up beasts fallen into pits on the sabbath day. His argument is this: If it be lawful on the sabbath day to relieve a beast, it is much more lawful to relieve a man: but you do the former. The evangelist reports them put to silence, but saith nothing of their conviction. It is an easier thing to stop malicious persons' mouths than to remove their prejudices. Malice will ordinarily hold the conclusion, when the reason of the soul infected with it is not able to justify the premises.

Luke 14:7

Ver. 7. A *parable* here hath somewhat a different signification from what it more ordinarily hath in the evangelists: it usually signifies a similitude; here it signifies either a wise saying, or a dark saying, by which he intended something further than in the parable he expressed, which he expounds, Lu 14:11. We may observe from hence, that the dining of friends together on the Lord's day is not unlawful, only they ought to look to their discourses, that they be suitable to the day.

Luke 14:8

Ver. 8-11. Two or three moral instructions we have in this parable.

1. That the law of Christ justifieth none in any rudeness and incivility.
2. That the disciples of Christ ought to have a regard to their reputation, to do nothing they may be ashamed of.
3. That it is according to the will of God, that honour should be given to those to whom honour belongeth; that the more honourable persons should sit in the more honourable places.

Grace gives men no exterior preference; though it makes men all glorious, yet it is within. But the more spiritual instruction (for which our Saviour put forth this parable) is in Lu 14:11. Our Saviour had but now, in the sight of these Pharisees, cured a man of a bodily dropsy; he is now attempting a cure of the spiritual dropsy of pride in their souls. He had before denounced a woe against the Pharisees for loving *the uppermost seats in the synagogues*, Lu 11:43, and told us, Mt 23:6, that they *loved the uppermost rooms at feasts*, and possibly he might at this feast see something of it. He therefore applies his discourse by pressing upon them humility, and showing them the danger of pride, which though it be a vice seated in the heart, yet by such little things discovereth itself in the outward conversation. He tells them, that God is such an enemy to pride, that he ordinarily so ordereth it in the government of the world, that usually self-exalting people are by one means or other abused, and brought

to shame and contempt, and those that are low in their own eyes are exalted; and if it doth not so fall out here, yet this will be what will at the last day befall them, in the day of God's righteous judgment. See Poole on "Mt 23:12". We shall meet with the same again, Lu 18:14.

Luke 14:12

Ver. 12-14. Many things are delivered in Scripture in the form of an absolute and universal prohibition, which must not be so understood, amongst which this is one instance. None must think that our Saviour doth here absolutely or universally forbid our invitations of our brethren, or kinsmen, or rich neighbours, or friends, to dinners or suppers with us; there was nothing more ordinarily practised amongst the Jews; Christ himself was at divers meals: but Christ by this teacheth us,

1. That this is no act of charity; it is indeed a lawful act of humanity and civility, and of a good tendency sometimes to procure amity and friendship amongst neighbours and friends, but no such act of charity as they could expect a heavenly reward for.
2. That such feastings ought not to be upheld in prejudice to our duty in relieving the poor, that is, they ought not to be maintained in such excesses and immoderate degrees, as by them we shall disable ourselves from that relief of the poor, which God requireth of us, as our duty, with respect to the estate with which he hath blessed us.
3. That we may most reasonably expect a recompence from heaven for such good works as we do, for which we are not recompensed on earth.
4. That God's recompences of us, for doing our duty in obedience to his commands, are often deferred until the resurrection of the just, but then they will not fail obedient souls.

Luke 14:15

Ver. 15. Whether this person had any gross conceptions of the kingdom of God, as a state of external happiness, and sensible satisfactions, I cannot say (though it be the opinion of some valuable interpreters): he might mean no more than, Blessed is he that shall come to heaven, and enjoy the celestial pleasures and satisfactions there; for that blessed state is called *the marriage supper of the Lamb*; and Christ spake to his disciples in this dialect, when he spake of drinking wine with them in his kingdom. But this passage both lets us know the good influence of spiritual discourse, to set the tongues of others on work, and also it lets us see what good meditations may be founded almost upon any subjects, if we have any heart thereunto. This gives our Saviour an occasion to put forth the following parable.

Luke 14:16

Ver. 16-24. We met with the same parable Mt 22:1-10, where we had the most of what is here, and really other considerable circumstances: See Poole on "Mt 22:1" and following verses to Mt 2:10. Christ's primary intention by this parable was certainly to foretell the rejection of the Jews for their contempt of his gospel, and the reception of the Gentiles. They were those who were first bidden, that is, called and invited by the preaching of John the Baptist, Christ himself, and the apostles, to the receiving of Christ, that so they might be prepared for *the marriage supper of the Lamb*, mentioned Re 19:9. The Gentiles, as a more rustic people, are set out under the notion of such as were in lanes, streets, and highways. It also informs us of some great causes of men's rejection of the grace of God offered them in the ministry of the gospel:

1. Their worldly cares and businesses.
2. Their sensible enjoyments and pleasures:

which did not hinder the Jews only, but one or other of which hinders the most of people still from receiving the grace of Christ tendered in the gospel. They are either not at leisure to attend to their souls, or they must

enjoy things sensible and sensual in a degree in which the enjoyment of them is inconsistent with that duty which God requireth of them who would be saved. *Perimus licitis*, most men perish by their sinful use (or abuse rather) of things in themselves lawful. It may be observed also, that the two first sorts made a kind of mannerly excuse, saying, *I pray thee have me excused*; but the last peremptorily said, *I cannot come*. Though secular employments be great diversions of us, and so hinderances of our minding things of highest concernment, yet sensual satisfactions and pleasures do most drown and swallow up the soul of man, and keep it from minding heaven and heavenly things. There have been a great many words spent about those words, *compel them to come in*, Lu 14:23. It appeareth to be almost the unanimous sense of the ancients, That no man ought by temporal punishments to be compelled to the profession of the true faith. Some of them have a little differed about such as, having once embraced the doctrine of the true faith, afterwards swerved from it; though the truth of it is, they can be no more compelled than the other, for the will admits of no violence. Be the truth what it will in those points, certain it is that external compulsion hath no colour of foundation in this text. They are the ministers of the gospel that are thus spoken to, who we know by Christ's commission had no civil power committed to them. Nor do we ever read that they exercised any in order to the bringing of the Gentiles to the embracing of the faith; nor do servants sent out to invite men to feasts (as these were) use to pull them in by head and shoulders, or to drive them in by whips and cudgels, only to use the best arguments they can to persuade them. Christ never prescribed any Spanish conversions of people. Man is presumed to be a rational creature, and taught even by nature to choose things which he sees are or may be of highest importance and concern. So that the very opening to men the riches of Divine grace, fitted to their lost and undone state, (which must also be showed them), is a compulsion of them, or would at least be so if men by the fall were not corrupted as to their wills, so as they will not follow the dictate of their understanding. But notwithstanding the depravation and averseness of the carnal will, yet as many as the Lord will please to show mercy to, by joining the efficacious operations of his Spirit with the exterior call in the ministry of the word, shall come in. The words are *αναγκασον εισελθειν*, make it necessary for them to come in, which no cudgels, no bodily punishments, can do, for they have their choice whether they will die or do it. It is used Mt 14:22; Christ compelled his disciples to go into a ship, *ηναγκασεν*, yet it is certain he used no swords, or staves, or whips, or pecuniary mulcts to

enforce them. A word of as high an import is used Lu 24:29, of the two disciples compelling Christ to stay with them, *παρεβιασαντο*. So Ga 2:14, *αναγκαζεις*, why dost thou force the Gentiles to Judaize? Yet it is certain Peter neither exercised nor called in the power of the magistrate to force the Gentiles. But when men began to spare their pains as to their tongues, to overpower and prevail upon men's hearts, then they began to compel them, by civil coercions, and to call in the civil magistrate, to the effecting of what they would have, while they themselves would do nothing; and thus, contrary to all sense and reason, they expounded these words, *compel them to come in*.

Luke 14:25

Ver. 25-27. We met with much the same Mt 10:37,38. The sum of the words is, That no man can be a true disciple of Christ, that giveth any friend, or any thing, a preference to Christ in the affections of his heart. Christ must be loved above all. It appeareth that the words must not be interpreted rigidly, for then they would oblige us to a thing,

1. Impossible in nature: *for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*, Eph 5:29. Yet life is one of the things mentioned which we ought to hate.
2. It is morally impossible: for the law of God commands us to *honour our father and mother*.

For the nonobservance of, or teaching contrary to, which law, teaching the people to say, *Corban, It is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me*, Christ so severely reflected on the Pharisees. Himself therefore doth not here teach others to hate their fathers or mothers, taking hatred in

a strict and absolute sense: *If any man hate not* signifieth here no more than, If any man doth love his father, wife, children, brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life, more than me, *he cannot be my disciple*. Nor is this any sense put upon the term *hate*, different from what must be the sense of it in other scriptures: Ge 29:31, *When the Lord saw that Leah was hated*, that is, less loved, as is expressed, Lu 14:30; so it must be interpreted in Lu 14:33. It also signified less loved, De 21:15,17 Mt 6:24 Joh 12:25. We met with the substance of what is here, Lu 14:27, in Mt 10:38, and Mr 8:34. See Poole on "Mt 10:38". See Poole on "Mr 8:34".

Luke 14:28

Ver. 28-33. Our Lord had in the parable of the supper showed what those things are which keep men from embracing the call of the gospel, to wit, their hearts' too much adherence to and embracing of sensible and sensual things. For the meeting of which temptation he had told them, Lu 14:25-27, that if they loved any thing in the world more than him, they could have no portion in him, they could not be his disciples, for (as Matthew saith) they are not worthy of him; nay, more than this, they must take up and bear their cross, and come after him. Here he directs them the best expedient in order to the performance of these duties, so hard to flesh and blood; that is, to sit down beforehand, and think what it will cost them to go through with the profession of religion. This, he tells them, ordinary prudence directeth men to, when they go about to build, or fight. As to the first, they make as good an estimate as they can of the charge. As to the latter, they consider both the charge, and the strength that they are able to produce to make opposition. So, saith he, must they do who will be his disciples:

1. Sit down and consider what it will cost them to become the Lord's building, what old foundations of nature must be digged up, what new foundation must be laid, how many stones must be laid before they can come up to a wall level to the promise wherein salvation is insured.
2. Then they must consider what oppositions they are like to meet with, from the world, the flesh, and the devil.

And they must be ready to forsake all for Christ, though, it may be, they shall not be actually called out to it. Only we must remember, that in parables every branch is not to be applied.

1. We must desire no conditions of peace from our spiritual adversaries.
2. In our counting up of our strength to maintain the spiritual fight we must do as princes use to do, who use to count the forces of their allies and confederates, as well as their own: so we must not count what opposition we, alone can maintain against the world, the flesh, and the devil; but what Christ (who is in covenant with us as to these fights) and we can do together.

So as consideration and pre-deliberation here are not required of as upon any account to deter us from the fight, (for fight we must, or die eternally), but to prepare us for the fight, by a firm and steady resolution, and to help us how to manage the fight, looking up to Christ for his strength and assistance in the management of it.

Luke 14:34

Ver. 34,35. See Poole on "Mt 5:13". See Poole on "Mr 9:50", where we met with the most of what we have in these verses. By *salt* in this place our Saviour seemeth to mean a Christian life and profession. It is a good, a noble, a great thing to be a Christian: but one that is so in an outward profession may lose his savour. Though a man cannot fall away from truth, and reality of grace, yet he may fall away from his profession; he may be given up to believe lies, and embrace damnable errors; he may shake off that dread of God which he seemed to have upon him; and then what is he good for? Wherewith shall he be seasoned? He is neither fit for the land nor the dunghill: as some things will spoil dunghills, so debauched professors do but make wicked men worse, by prejudicing and hardening

them against the ways and truths of God.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. It is a usual epiphonema, or sentence, by which Christ often shuts up grave and weighty discourses: the sense is; You had therefore need to look about you, and to undertake the profession of my religion upon such weighty grounds and principles as will carry you through the practice of it to the end, against all the oppositions you shall meet with; for if you apostatize from your profession, you will be the worst of men, neither fit for the church nor for the world (for you will make that the worse;) indeed fit for nothing but for the fire of hell.

Luke 15:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 15:1,2 The Pharisees murmur at Christ for receiving sinners.

Lu 15:3-7 The parable of the lost sheep,

Lu 15:8-10 and piece of silver,

Lu 15:11-32 and of the prodigal son.

Ver. 1,2. I have so often taken notice, that the term *all* in the New Testament is very often used to signify, not all the individuals of that species, or order of men, to which it is applied, but only a great and considerable number of them, that it is needless again to repeat it. None can imagine, that every individual publican and sinner in those parts, where Christ now was, came to hear Christ, but only many of them, or some of every sort. Thus publicans and harlots entered into the kingdom of God, while the children of the kingdom, and such as appeared to lie fairer for it, were cast out. The scribes, who were the interpreters of the law, and the Pharisees, who were the rigid observers of their decrees and interpretations, *murmured*, they were disturbed and troubled at it; thinking that because the law appointed no sacrifice for bold and presumptuous sinners, therefore there was no mercy in God for them, or those of whom they had such a notion, and that they were *ipso jure* excommunicated, and therefore Christ sinned in eating or drinking with them, or in any degree

receiving of them; and from hence concluding he was no prophet: as if because ordinarily persons are known by their companions with whom they converse, therefore it had been a general rule; as if one might have concluded, that their doctorships were ignorant, because they conversed with them that were so, for their instruction; or could conclude, that the physician is sick, because his converse is with the sick, for their cure and healing. A man is not to be judged to be such as he converses with necessarily, or in order to their good, which was the end of all our Saviour's converse with these sinners. Besides, were they themselves without sin? The root of their uncharitableness was their opinion of their own righteousness, from the works of the law, according to their own jejune interpretation of it. But let us hear our Saviour's reply.

Luke 15:3

Ver. 3-7. See Poole on "Mt 18:12", and See Poole on "Mt 18:13", where we met with the same parable, though not related with so many circumstances. Lu 15:7, which is the *epiparabole*, showeth us the principal thing which our Saviour by this parable designs to teach His hearers, and us also, viz. That Christ is so far from rejecting the greatest sinners, that repent, and flee unto his mercy, that, if it were possible, he should take a greater satisfaction in such an issue of Divine providence, than in all the glorified saints. No repenting sinner, let his sins be as many and as great as they can be, shall be unwelcome unto Christ, fleeing to him with a broken heart (resolved against his former courses) for pardon and mercy. But as it happeneth to them who by study and practice make great experiments, they can hardly find out what they mostly seek for, but in the way to it they will find out several other notions, which are of great use to them; so it will fall out to them who diligently study the parables of the gospel. Though some one truth be that the explication of which our Saviour doth chiefly intend; yet the parable will also afford some other profitable instructions, not unworthy of our notice and regard.

The *man* here intended is Christ, who was the Son of man, as well as the eternal Son of God. The *hundred sheep* signifies the whole number of his elect, whether in heaven or on earth, whether yet called or hereafter to be called. The sheep going astray signifieth all the elect, who are *by nature*

children of wrath as well as others, dead in trespasses and sins, Eph 2:1,3. Here is mention but of one sheep so gone astray, though there be many, to let us know the love of Christ to every individual soul, that if but one of them had been to have been redeemed, he would have come down from heaven to have redeemed it.

The *ninety-nine left in the wilderness* seem to me to be the glorified saints, they are the only *just persons, who need no repentance*. The countryman's going after the lost sheep till he finds it, then bringing it home upon his shoulders rejoicing, signifies the infinite love of Christ, both in leaving his Father's throne, and the society of the glorified saints and angels, to come to seek and to save that which was lost, to pay a redemption price for them; then sending his Holy Spirit and the ministers of his gospel to invite and effectually to persuade them to accept of his salvation, truly repenting of their sins; and also preserving them through his power by faith unto salvation: for it is upon his shoulders that any elect soul is brought home; it is his eye must find them, and his power that must bring them home.

The countryman's rejoicing, and calling his neighbours to rejoice, &c., signifieth the satisfaction and well pleasedness of Christ in the conversion of sinners, which is more plainly expressed Lu 15:7, *I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance*. We have much the same again Lu 15:10, leaving out the comparative part. There also it is, *there is joy in the presence of the angels of God*. We will consider the expressions in both the verses together; as to which there may arise these questions:

Question 1. What is here meant by joy in heaven? The inhabitants of heaven are, God, the blessed angels, and the glorified saints; how can they be said to rejoice, whereas rejoicing is in us the product of a passion by which we triumph in our union to some good, which we before wanted?

Answer. When terms expressive of our passions are applied to perfect beings, we must understand them so, as they alone can agree to such beings, separated from those excesses which they have in beings more imperfect. Joy signifieth nothing but the full satisfaction of the will in a good obtained. Thus God is said to rejoice in his people, Isa 62:5.

Question 2. Who are these ninety-nine just persons that need no repentance? (For the number, it is but an uncertain number put for one certain.)

Answer.

1. Some by such as *need no repentance* understand, such as think so of themselves, though indeed they do need it. Others understand it comparatively, such as if compared with others need no repentance.
2. Others by repentance understand penance; such sober persons as stand in no need of a being called to a public confession, for the satisfaction of the church offended. I had rather understand it of the glorified saints, whose society Christ left when he came to work out our redemption. For the others, it had been no great matter for Christ to have told them, that God, and the holy saints and angels, rejoice more over one repenting sinner, than over ninety-nine impenitent sinners and self righteous persons, who continually grieve him, and whom he abhorreth. But then,

Question 3. How can it be said, that God, and the angels and saints, more rejoice over one repenting sinner, than over ninety-nine glorified saints?

Answer. It is universally agreed, that Christ speaks here of God, and of the angels, after the manner of men; of whose nature it is to express more passion upon a new object that pleaseth them, than upon others that they have been long pleased with; as a parent rejoiceth more over one child recovered from the jaws of death, than over all the rest of his children. Though nothing can be new to God, that is, which he did not see and foreknow, yet some things may be new to him *in facto esse*, as done and fulfilled: and though we must not imagine any mutation or alteration of the Divine Being upon any emergency amongst men; yet to express how infinitely pleased God is, in the repentance and conversion of great sinners, he is set out as receiving an augmentation of satisfaction in the effecting of it. Such expressions as these condescended to by God for our consolation, must not be so strained by us as to occasion any unbecoming thoughts of God.

Question. Some query how the angels know of the conversion of a sinner;

and from hence the papists would some of them infer, that they know our hearts, because that is the seat of conversion.

Answer. Both the angels and the glorified saints also may know it by God revealing it to them.

Luke 15:8

Ver. 8-10. This parable (as appeareth by the conclusion of it) is of the same import with the other, and needs no further explication. By both these parables our blessed Lord lets the Pharisees know the end he aimed at in conversing with publicans and sinners, viz. In order to their repentance and conversion, than which nothing could be more grateful and well pleasing to that God who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that they should turn from their wickedness and live. Of the same import is also the following parable, which taketh up all the remaining part of this chapter.

Luke 15:11

Ver. 11-16. The scope of this excellent parable is apparently to magnify the grace of God, who is willing to receive and to treat kindly the greatest transgressors, seriously repenting, and turning unto God; but in it we are also,

1. Instructed in the original state of man, like that of a child in his father's house, happy and wanting nothing.
2. The most miserable estate of fallen men, such especially as run to great excess of riot.

3. The true way of a sinner's returning to God.
4. The readiness of our gracious Father to receive, and his wonderful kindness in the receiving and embracing, repenting and returning sinners.
5. The envy that is sometimes found in good souls to others receiving (as they think) more favour from God than they do.
6. The gentleness and meekness of God in dealing with us, notwithstanding our infirmities and misbecoming passions.

God is again here represented under the notion of a man who had two sons: some that are his children by regeneration as well as creation; he having given them that believe a right to be called *the sons of God*, Joh 1:12. Others that are his sons by creation only. The latter are here represented under the notion of a younger son. This younger son is represented as dissatisfied with living in his father's house, desiring his portion, &c. All men and women by nature were equally the sons of God, being all in Adam, who was so. All men swerved from him; in Adam all sinned, all died. But some again by grace are returned to their Father's house. Others challenge a relation to God, as his creatures, but are not of their Father's house, but desire only a portion of the good things of this life. Some desire honours, some riches, all of them life and health, &c. God, like a liberal father, gives some of these good things to one, others to another; to some more than one kind of them: whatever they have of this nature is from him who maketh his sun to shine and his rain to fall upon the just and unjust. Wicked men, when they are thus furnished by God, quickly take their *journey into a far country*, are more alienated and estranged from God by lewd and wicked practices than they were by nature; waste their substance, the health of their bodies, their time of life, their estates, their great and honourable capacities, by giving up themselves to lewd and riotous kinds of life, to the high dishonour of Almighty God. It pleaseth God by his providence sometimes to bring these men into straits; when they are so brought, they will take any base, sordid course to relieve themselves, rather than they will think of returning to their heavenly Father; of themselves they will rather choose to serve swine. But if they be such as belong to God's election of grace, the providence of God will not leave them. Though there be little food for a

soul in the husks of sensible satisfactions, yet they shall not have a bellyful of them. God will bring them off from satisfaction in any thing, and make every condition uneasy to them.

Luke 15:17

Ver. 17. Every sinner is beside himself; his reason lackeys to his lust and passion, he is governed by appetite, and that rageth in him, while his understanding is blind, and cannot discern between good and evil; and when he hath in any measure discerned any thing, his will is stubborn, and chooseth the evil. Conversion is but the return of a soul to itself. The first thoughts of which conversion arise from a soul's consideration, what a poor miserable creature it is, ready to perish for ever, while never a poor soul belonging to God, no, not the meanest servant in his family, wanteth any good thing that is necessary for him. These things increase in a soul thoughts of returning to his heavenly Father, through the operation of the Holy Spirit of God; for of ourselves we are not sufficient so much as to think one good thought.

Luke 15:18

Ver. 18-20. The way of a sinner's returning to God must be by arising, going to the Father, confessing his sins with the aggravations of them, disclaiming any goodness, any righteousness in himself, humbling himself to God's footstool.

I will arise (saith the prodigal) and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. He arose from the sleep and bed of sin, and came unto his father. We are not here told by whose strength, or in whose assistance, he arose and came. We must remember that our Saviour is here

representing a spiritual notion by an ordinary human action; now men have an innate power to natural motions, though not to spiritual actions. We are elsewhere told, that no man cometh to the Father, but by Christ, nor doth any man come unto the Son, but he whom the Father draweth. Every one as he is taught of the Father cometh unto the Son. And again, that though we be *saved by faith*, yet it is *not of ourselves, it is the gift of God*; and, *it is given to us in the behalf of Christ to believe*, Php 1:29. These are but several expressions signifying, by the tender affections and gracious reception of earthly parents of a returning prodigal son, the exceeding readiness of our heavenly Father to receive penitent sinners; he is so far from discouraging great sinners from taking up thoughts of returning unto him, that he cherisheth the embryos of such resolutions: *I said*, (saith the psalmist), *I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin*, Ps 32:5. God seeth the first good motions and stirrings of our hearts towards him, and he needs must do so, for he stirreth them up in us; there is no sacred fire upon our altar, but first cometh down from heaven. While yet the soul is far off from believing, and closing with Christ actually, and hath but some thoughts of that tendency, God looks upon it, encourages it, meeteth it as it were half way; and indeed if he did not, our goodness would be but like a morning dew, which would quickly pass away; our first inclinations would perish like an untimely birth, before it hath seen the light.

Luke 15:21

Ver. 21. Now the good thoughts and resolutions of the sinner ripen into action, and the first of it is an expression of his convictions and humiliation by a humble confession of his sins, with their aggravations, as committed against God, and that in the sight of God, and this God his Father, his unworthiness so much as of the name of a son to such a Father. The petitionary part of what he resolved upon, Lu 15:19, is not here again repeated, but to be understood. Men may by the common grace of God, denied to no man, have some good thoughts, but they die away, and come to no maturity, unless the Holy Spirit of God breathes upon them, and maintains and upholdeth them in the soul; but where the Lord designs a thorough change in a soul, the Spirit of the Lord comes, and convinceth

the soul of sin and of righteousness: and where he doth so, the resolution ripens into action, and produces in the soul a true and hearty contrition, and confession of its sin, with humble petitions and a resignation of itself to the Lord's will, and a casting of itself upon God's free grace and mercy.

Luke 15:22

Ver. 22-24. We must remember that we are in a parable where a sinner is represented to us under the notion of a prodigal son; God, under the notion of an indulgent father; a repenting sinner, under the notion of a prodigal returning to his father, confessing his error, petitioning his father for mercy, acknowledging he deserveth none, but casting himself upon his father's goodness and mercy. It is observed by an eminent author, that amongst all the parables this is one of the most famous, and wherein is the most full and perfect representation of the thing intended to be represented, and an applicableness of every part of the similitude to that which it is brought to represent. This part of it represents the grace of God to truly repenting sinners. We before heard his readiness and willingness to receive them, this part lets us see the manner how he will treat them. As in case of apostasy, the seeming righteousness and profession of men shall not be remembered, Eze 3:20 33:13; so in case of a true and hearty repentance, the sins of a soul shall not be remembered, Isa 43:25.

The father taketh no notice of the prodigal's leaving his house, or wasting his estate riotously, but saith, *Bring forth the best robe*, την στολην την πρωτην; and *put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf*, τον μοσχον τον σιτευτον. I find some interpreters who by the *fatted calf* are willing enough to understand Christ; yet interpreting *the best robe*, innocency, or inherent righteousness. Nor is it an ill interpretation, if we consider, that God, at the same time when he imputeth the merits of Christ to the soul for justification, doth also put his Spirit of holiness into the soul, by which being renewed in the inward man, this man brings forth the fruits of holiness unto righteousness, Eze 36:26,27. But why we should not understand both the phrases of the application of Christ's merits, and the imputation of his righteousness to the soul, I cannot tell, considering, that the church of Laodicea is counselled to buy of him *white raiment*, that she might *be clothed*, Re 3:18; and that those clothed with *white robes*, Re 7:14, are said to *have*

washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and that though the habits of grace are sometimes in holy writ compared to clothing, *Be ye clothed with humility,* (saith the apostle), yet these are not ς στολ ς ς πρωτ ς . I should therefore rather choose to interpret the killing of the fatted calf for the prodigal son, as representing that application of the blood of Christ, which is made to every sinner that truly repenteth, and maketh its application to God for mercy; and the best robe, as the righteousness of Christ, in that moment reckoned unto the soul (thus believing) for righteousness. Further yet, (to consider it only in the parable), the word θ υσ α τε, sacrifice the fatted calf, seems to signify what a great cause of thanksgiving to God, as well as joy amongst men, the conversion of a sinner is. We that are earthly parents, or ministers of the gospel, should not receive the news, or see the visible probability of a soul's being converted, and returning unto God, without offering a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto God for doing such things for men, and without a true and hearty rejoicing in ourselves. But to return again to the meaning of the parable.

Let us eat, and be merry: consider these words as the words of a heavenly Father, they signify unto us, that the eternal God, from the day that a repenting soul hath the blood of Christ applied to it, and is clothed with his righteousness, is at peace with the soul, hath a communion with it, and that it from that time hath a true right to spiritual mirth and rejoicing; for *light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart:* though possibly the soul at present, through temptations, cannot apprehend it, and be not actually possessed of that joy and peace which followeth believing, yet it hath a right to it, and indeed none but that soul hath any thing to do with peace.

It followeth, *For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.* A sinful soul is a dead soul, as the woman *that liveth in pleasure* is said to be *dead while she liveth,* by the apostle. The conversion of a sinner is as a resurrection from the dead. Nor is any soul capable of any true mirth, till it be reconciled to God through the blood of Christ.

Luke 15:25

Ver. 25-32. This last part of the parable is not so exactly applicable to that which it is brought to represent as the former parts are, but it serveth excellently to show us that envy which is found in our hearts by nature to the spiritual good and advantage of others. Two things are observable in it:

1. Man's peevishness and envy.
2. God's meekness towards us under our frowardness.

By the *elder son* some think the Jews are represented, whose peevishness to the Gentiles, and the offer of the grace of the gospel to them, is made appear to us from many places of holy writ. Others think that by the *elder son* are represented hypocrites, who swelling in all opinion of themselves, and their own righteousness, have no patience to hear that any others should be preferred in the favour of God before them. Why may we not say that all are understood by it, even the best of God's people, who, if they narrowly search their own hearts, will find something of pride and envy remaining in the best of them? And as the former prompts them to judge themselves as much deserving the favour of God, even in special particular dispensations, as any others; so the latter inclineth them to repine at such dispensations of Divine grace as others receive, and they want: two corruptions which we are as much concerned to keep watch upon, or against, as any other; speaking both a peevishness to the honour and glory of God, a dissatisfaction in his dispensations, and an offer at the control of his wisdom and justice, and also a great degree of uncharitableness, our eye being evil because the Lord is good. Besides that it seemeth to put in a claim of merit; and the soul that indulges itself in such thoughts seems to say that it hath deserved more than it doth receive; for without such a supposition, it is the most unreasonable thing imaginable, that any person should be displeased that another should have a greater share in the favour of God than he, while he himself receives more than he can lay a claim unto, and God may do with his own what he pleaseth. The meekness of God in dealing with us under our frowardness is as much remarkable. *Son,* (saith this father in the parable), *thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found.* This must be understood of God $\alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\pi\alpha\theta\omega\varsigma$ as

spoken after the manner of men, who show greater passions upon the receiving of a good that is new to them, and possibly surprising, than they ordinarily show upon the view of a good of which they have had longer fruition; so it confirms what was before said in Lu 15:7,10. We must take heed of thinking that any thing can make a change or alteration in God, but must look upon it only as an expression of God's high satisfaction and well pleasedness in a sinner's conversion, and turning unto him; so as if it were possible any good should more than other affect the Divine Being, it would be this. So as this whole parable is of excellent use, not only to instruct sinners in their miserable state, till they be reconciled to God, but to deliver them from all temptations to fear that, heartily returning, they shall not be accepted.

Luke 16:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 16:1-13 The parable of the unjust steward.

Lu 16:14-18 Christ reproveth the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who were covetous, and derided him.

Lu 16:19-31 The parable of the rich man and Lazarus the beggar.

Ver. 1-8. Hierom of old thought this parable was very obscure; and Julian and other apostates, together with some of the heathen philosophers, took occasion from it to reproach the doctrine of Christ, as teaching and commanding acts of unrighteousness. But there will appear no such difficulty in it, nor cause of reproach to Christ and his doctrine from it, if we consider what I have before hinted, that it is no more necessary to a parable that all the actions in it supposed be just and honest, than that all the parts of it be true in matter of fact, whether past or possible to be; for a

parable is not designed to inform us in a matter of fact, but to describe to us our duty, under a fictitious representation: nor doth every part of a parable point at some correspondent duty to be done by us; but the main scope for which it is brought is principally to be attended to by us, and other pieces of duty which may be hinted to us, are to be judged of and proved not from the parable, but from other texts of holy writ where they are inculcated. The main things in which our Saviour seemeth desirous by this parable to instruct us, are,

1. That we are but stewards of the good things God lends us, and must give an account to our Master of them.
2. That being no more than stewards intrusted with some of our Master's goods for a time, it is our highest prudence, while we have them in our trust, to make such a use of them as may be for our advantage when we give up our account.

Thus we shall hear our Lord in the following verses expounding his own meaning. To this purpose he supposed a rich man to have a steward, and to have received some accusation against him, as if he embezzled his master's goods committed to his trust. Upon which he calleth him to account, and tells him that he should be his steward no longer. He supposes this steward to be one who had no other means of livelihood and subsistence than what his place afforded him, a than not used to labour, and too proud to beg. At length he fixed his resolution, to send for his master's debtors, and to abate their obligations, making them debtors to his master for much less than indeed they were; by this means he probably hoped, that when he was turned off from his master he should be received by them. He supposes his master to have heard of it, and to have commended him, not for his honesty, but for his wit in providing for the time to come. What was knavery in this steward, is honest enough in those who are the stewards of our heavenly Lord's goods, suppose riches, honours, parts, health, life, or any outward accommodation, viz. to use our Lord's goods for the best profit and advantage to ourselves, during such time as we are intrusted with them. For though an earthly lord and his steward have particular divided interests, and he that maketh use of his lord's goods for his own best advantage cannot at the same time make use of them for the best advantage of his master, yet the case is different betwixt our heavenly Lord and us. It hath pleased God so to twist the

interest of his glory with our highest good, that no man can better use his Master's goods for the advantage of his glory, than he who best useth them for the highest good, profit, and advantage to himself; nor doth any man better use them for his own interest, than he who best useth them for God's glory. So as here the parable halteth, by reason of the disparity betwixt the things that are compared. And though the unjust steward could not be commended for the honesty, but only for the policy, of his action, yet we who are stewards of the gifts of God, in doing the like, that is, making use of our Master's goods for our own best profit and advantage, may act not only wisely, but also honestly; and indeed Christ in this parable blames men for not doing so: *The children of this world* (saith he) *are wiser in their generation than the children of light*. By *the children of this world*, he meaneth such as this steward was, men who regard not eternity or the concerns of their immortal souls, but only regard the things of this life, what they shall eat, or drink, or put on. By *the children of light*, he meaneth such as live under the light of the gospel, and receive the common illumination of the gospel; though if we yet understand it more strictly, of those who are *translated out of darkness into marvellous light*, it is too true, they are not so wise, and politic, and industrious for heaven, as worldly men are to obtain their ends in getting the world. He saith, *the men of this world are wiser in their generation*, that is, in their kind, as to those things about which they exercise their wit and policy, than the children of God.

Luke 16:9

Ver. 9. That by *mammon* here is meant riches is universally agreed, but whether it originally be a Chaldaic, or Syriac, or Punic word is not so well agreed. The Chaldee paraphrast useth it, Ho 5:11; but the Hebrew there is quite otherwise, (according to our translation), *he willingly walked after the commandment*. But if the notion of those be true, that some of those

nations had an idol called Mammon, whom they made the god of riches, answering the Grecian Plutus, it fairly interprets the Chaldee paraphrast. They followed the command for idolatry, for such was Jeroboam's commandment, mentioned in that text, and from thence it might be that the Syrians and Punics called riches mammon. We have the word in the New Testament four times, thrice in this chapter, once Mt 6:24. It is called *the mammon of unrighteousness*, by a Hebraism; it is as much as, the unrighteous mammon: by which we must not understand ill gotten goods, (for God hateth robbery for a burnt offering), we must restore such goods, not make friends of them; but riches are so called, because of the manifold temptations to sin which arise from them, upon which account they are also called *deceitful*. But others think that it is so called in opposition to *the true riches*, mentioned Lu 16:11. So that *the mammon of unrighteousness* is the mammon of falsehood, or hurtful riches, riches of hurtfulness (*αδιχια* sometimes signifies hurt or wrong, and *αδιχειν*, *laedere*, *nocere*). Of these riches, which are no true riches, and which deceive the soul, and do hurt and mischief to a soul, exposing it to temptation, Christ commands us to *make friends*; either,

1. To make God our friend, not by meriting from him any thing by our disposal of them, but by obedience to his will in our distribution of them. Or:
2. To make poor Christians our friends, so as we may have their prayers. So that, *when ye fail*, when you die, when you fail of any more comfort from them, *they may receive you into everlasting habitations*; the holy Trinity, or the blessed angels, (whose work it is, as we shall hear, to carry souls into Abraham's bosom), may receive you into heaven.

Luke 16:10

Ver. 10. This is a usual sentence, (our Saviour made use of many such), as to which kind of speeches it is not necessary they should be universally true, it is sufficient if they generally be so. Besides that, our Saviour plainly speaketh here according to the common opinion and judgment of men. Men ordinarily judge that he who is faithful in a little thing, of no high concern or moment, will be faithful in what is of a higher concern, or greater moment; and if they have found a person unfaithful in a small

thing, they will conclude that he will be so in a greater, and not trust him: though sometimes it falls out otherwise, that one who is faithful enough in some trifling things, prove unfaithful in a greater trust, where unfaithfulness will turn more to his profit; and on the contrary, he that is untruthful in a little thing, may prove more faithful in a greater; but none will trust to that: and that is our Saviour's design, to teach us that God will do by us as we in the like case do by our servants or neighbours.

Luke 16:11

Ver. 11. This verse now opposeth *the unrighteous mammon* to *the true riches*, which would strongly incline one to think, that by *the mammon of unrighteousness*, before mentioned, our Saviour meant only false and deceitful riches. By the *true riches* I cannot think is meant the gospel, which indeed is said to be committed to trust of the ministers, but not of all Christians. I had rather interpret it of special, effectual grace, which is of all other the true riches: and so it teacheth us this great truth, That God is justified in the denial of his special grace to those who do not make a due use of his common gifts and grace; and indeed here will lie men's damnation, because they do not make a just use of that common grace which they have, and might make a better use of it than they do. If they would be faithful in that, God would not deny them the true riches.

Luke 16:12

Ver. 12. Let it be questioned whether *αλλοτριον* might not have been translated foreign as well as *another man's*, for so interpreters expound that phrase: If you have not been faithful in things that are without you, which are little, compared with things that are within us. Yet riches are indeed properly not ours, we are but the stewards of them, and part of them are other men's, and only trusted into our hands, to dispense to them according to our Master's order. Grace is our own, especially justifying and sanctifying grace; because it is given us of God solely for our own use and advantage. We use to say, That those who have been, bad servants seldom prove good masters. In the trust of our riches we are but servants; God will not give out of his special saving grace to those that abuse the trust of his common gifts and grace.

Luke 16:13

Ver. 13. See Poole on "Mt 6:24".

Luke 16:14

Ver. 14. Concerning the Pharisees' covetousness we have often heard before; and indeed they were so from this principle, that none but the rich were happy and blessed, and that all poor people were cursed, Joh 7:49; in opposition to whom some think that our Saviour, Lu 6:20, blessed the poor. The promises relating to the Old Testament, and made to the Jews, were generally of temporal blessings, though under them spiritual mercies were also understood. As hypocrites can never endure to have their beloved lusts touched, and persons that have drunk in an error have no patience to hear it contradicted; so the Pharisees had no patience to hear that doctrine, which crossed what they had taught, and struck at their darling lusts.

They derided him: the word used signifieth a deriding with the highest degree of scorn and contempt.

Luke 16:15

Ver. 15. By justifying here is to be understood either an appearing before men as just, and strict observers of the law, or a predicating of themselves as just: You (saith our Saviour) make a fine show, and great brags amongst men; but God's eye goeth deeper, he knoweth the heart, what pride, and covetousness, and hypocrisy lodge there. Men do not know your hearts, but God knoweth them. All is not gold by God's touchstone that glitters in man's eyes. Nay, many things which are highly esteemed amongst men, as matters of great devotion and piety and merit, and which they applaud others for, are in the sight of God no better than abominations. This highly obliges all not to make their estimate of things, from the value and estimate which men put upon them; not every thing, but many things which are highly esteemed amongst men are abomination in the sight of

God.

Luke 16:16

Ver. 16. We had the sum of these words: See Poole on "Mt 11:12" and See Poole on "Mt 11:13". The connection of these words in this place seems to be this: Do not think it strange that I preach some doctrines to you which seem new to you, though indeed they are no other than was before contained in the precepts of the Old Testament; for the law and the prophets, the preaching of them, held but till John, since whose time the gospel hath been preached, which gives you a clearer light into the will of God than you had before; and it pleaseth God to give it a great acceptation in the world, though you reject it; *every man presseth*, that is, many press, *into it*; so as God will not want a people, though you mock and deride the gospel, instead of embracing of it, as you ought to do.

Luke 16:17

Ver. 17. Neither do you scandalize me, as if I came to teach a new doctrine, contrary to the law and the prophets. I tell you the quite contrary; heaven and earth shall pass away, before one tittle of the law shall pass. Your vain interpretations of the law shall be destroyed, or amended, but the law of my Father shall remain as a certain rule of life to his people until the world shall have an end.

Luke 16:18

Ver. 18. See Poole on "Mt 5:32", where this is expounded; also, See Poole on "Mt 19:9", and See Poole on "Mr 10:11".

Luke 16:19

Ver. 19-22. It is a question of no great concern for us to be resolved about, whether this be a history, or narrative of matter of fact, or a parable. Those that contend on either side have probable arguments for their opinion, and

it may be they best judge who determine it to be neither the one nor the other, but a profitable discourse, that hath in it something of both. Our chief concern is to consider what our Lord by it designed to instruct us in. And certainly those do not judge amiss who think that this discourse hath a great reference to what went before, Lu 16:9,10, where our Saviour had been exhorting his hearers to make themselves *friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*, as also to the Pharisees deriding him for his doctrine, Lu 16:14; our Lord by this discourse letting them know the danger of covetousness and uncharitableness, and also letting them know that what is *highly esteemed among men may be abomination in the sight of God*. He telleth them there was a certain rich man, who lived in great plenty and splendour; his clothing was purple and fine linen, that is, exceeding costly and splendid; his fare, or diet, was delicate and sumptuous, and that every day, from whence may easily be concluded, that if he had had a heart thereunto, he might have spared something for the poor. Nor were the objects of his charity far off.

There was a certain beggar named Lazarus, poor enough, for he was full of sores, and would have been glad of the offal of the rich man's table; but the dogs were more charitable than their master; we read of nothing which the rich man gave him, but *the dogs came and licked his sores*. What was the end of this? The beggar died, and he was by the angels carried into the bosom of Abraham, that is, into heaven; some will have the phrase signify, one of the chiefest mansions in heaven. Abraham was the father of believers, and an hospitable person while he lived upon the earth. Lazarus is expressed to have been conveyed to him. There are many things discoursed by men of wit and learning about this *Abraham's bosom*, but the best centre here, that by it is meant heaven: and from hence two great points are proved:

1. That the soul is capable of an existence separated from the body, and therefore is not, as some atheists dream, a mere affection of that, and an accident, but a distinct spiritual subsistence.
2. That the souls of the good, when they depart from their bodies, immediately pass into an eternal state of blessedness.

Luke 16:23

Ver. 23,24. Και εν τω αδη, *And in hell.* The world hath been filled with disputes about the true signification of the word αδησ, which is here translated *hell*. The most probably true notion of it is, that it signifies, the state of the dead, both of the dead body, and so it often signifieth the grave, and of the departed soul. A very learned man saith, that if he mistakes not, this is the only text in Scripture in which by it is to be understood the place of torments. The Hebrew word which is translated by this, far more often signifying the place of the blessed, whither the saints and patriarchs went when they died, than the place whither sinners went; but Lu 16:24 makes it appear, that here it signifies hell, properly so called, as it imports the place of the damned. We must understand our Saviour in this whole διατυπωσις to speak to us figuratively, that by things which we understand we might comprehend spiritual things. Heaven and hell are at too great a distance for souls in each to discourse one with another: neither have souls any eyes to lift up. We are by this taught:

1. That as the souls of good men, when they leave their bodies, go into a state of eternal bliss, where are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and enjoy a felicity which we are not able to express, but is set out to us under the notion of Abraham's bosom, to let us know that it is a place of rest, and communion with saints, and the same felicity which Abraham the friend of God doth enjoy: so the souls of wicked men, when they leave their bodies, shall go into a place of torments, the greatness of which being such as we are not able to conceive, they are expressed to us under the notion of being tormented by fire.
2. That it will be a great part of the misery of damned souls, to understand those to be in a state of happiness whom they in this life have scorned, despised, and abused, and, it may be, have been instruments to hasten them to those blessed mansions.
3. That there will come a time when the proudest sinners will be glad of the help of the meanest saints, if they could obtain it. *Father Abraham,* (saith the rich man), *send Lazarus,* that Lazarus whom when alive I suffered to lie at my gate full of sores, and would not relieve.

4. That the state of the damned will be void of the least degrees of comfort and satisfaction. The rich man desireth but a cooling of his tongue with so much water as could be brought upon the tip of Lazarus's finger.
5. That the tongue is a member, the abuse of which will in another life lie very heavy upon lost souls.

Luke 16:25

Ver. 25,26. We must still remember, that all these things are spoken in a figure. The *great gulf* here mentioned, to be fixed between heaven and hell, is too wide for persons on opposite sides of it to be heard communicating their minds each to other. All that our Saviour designs to let us know is, that the circumstances of damned souls are such, that, if it were possible, they would beg the help and assistance of the meanest saints, whom they have in this life most scorned, despised, or abused; but as they will have no such opportunities as to crave any thing at their hands, so if they had, they could not receive the least relief from them; their state is determined, they are fixed for eternity, and there can be no change of their condition for the better. Abraham is here brought in calling this man *Son*, either as lineally descended from him, or being a member of that church of which he was the father. It will add to the torments of the damned, to hear and consider the former means and advantages they have been under for salvation, if they have descended from godly parents, or have been members of the church of Christ.

That in thy lifetime thou receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things. The *good things* which the rich man received were no more the cause of his damnation, than the *evil things* which Lazarus met with were the cause of his salvation; but the rich man's ill use of the former, and Lazarus's good improvement of the latter, through the grace of God bestowed on him. Though it be not ordinary with God to give the same persons the upper and the nether springs, yet he sometimes doth it, of which Abraham, and Lot, and Job, and David, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph of Arimathea, are some instances. But the term *thy* signifies the error of this rich man; he looked upon the good things of this life as his

portion, those were the things which he set his heart upon, and let his heart run out to the neglecting the good things of another life. Lazarus received *evil things*, God gave him a mean, afflicted portion in this life; but he was found patient, and glorifying of God by a quiet and believing submission to his will under them; now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. So then it seemeth that departed souls do not sleep, as some have dreamed; if they did, they could neither have been capable of comfort or torment.

And besides all this, there is a great gulf fixed, &c.; the meaning of which is no more than,

1. That the state of souls upon their separation from the bodies of men and women is determined and fixed. As the tree falls, so it lieth.
2. That there is no commerce, or intercourse, between glorified and damned souls. The papists passage from purgatory to heaven is a new found way, or rather a new fancied one. If purgatory be (as they pretend) a place where souls are tormented, it may be wondered how they should pass over this gulf: it seemeth Abraham did not know the way, St. Peter knew as little; this is one of his pretended vicar's new discoveries, but it is no wisdom in any souls to trust to this passage, of which Abraham knew as little as he did of our prayers passing to them, or to God for them, for there is *χασμα μεγα εστηριγμενον*, a great gulf established.

Luke 16:27

Ver. 27,28. Him that the rich man would not hear, when he lay at his gate full of sores, exhorting him to do good and to distribute, to give alms of all that he had, and to make himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, he would now have restored to the earth again, his soul before the general resurrection reunited to His body, that he might go unto his father's house, and give them warning, that they might not come into the misery which he felt. But is there any charity in hell? Is there any there that wish well to souls upon earth? Or rather, are not damned souls, like persons infected with the plague, desirous that others might be made as miserable as themselves? A grave and acute author saith, he prayeth not

for them, but for himself, that he might not be the note miserable by the company of those who upon the earth were his near relations, and dear unto him. But we must remember that our Saviour here speaketh all in a figure, and that which our Saviour by these expressions designs to instruct us in is no more than this, That although atheistical and proud and haughty souls in this life make a mock at hell, and at the wrath of God to be revealed after this life, and despise the poor servants of God, who by their doctrine, or holy life and example, would teach them better things, yet they shall find the fire of hell so hot, the wrath of God so terrible and intolerable, that if you could imagine that souls under those miseries could have the least dram of charity and good nature left it, them, though they apprehend themselves past all hopes of recovery to a better state, yet they would beg that some of those faithful ministers, or godly people, whom they have rejected, despised, and abused, might be sent to every friend they have in the world, to warn them from doing as they have done, and running the hazard of those torments they feel for doing of such things. The papists, who idly go about from hence to prove a sense in departed souls of the state of their friends that are yet alive upon the earth, can derive very little comfort from that speculation out of this text; which if it could prove any thing of that nature could prove no more than that damned souls have such a sense, and might by the same argument also evince their charity. But figurative expressions must not be so closely applied. I have showed what I judge to be the true instruction from this passage.

Luke 16:29

Ver. 29. Christ here represents to us the genius of wicked and carnal men, that would be converted by revelations and some extraordinary signs; if they could see one risen from the dead, then they would believe the resurrection; if they could see a glorified saint, or hear or see a damned soul, then they would believe a heaven and a hell: he here brings in Abraham saying, *They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.* God will have men believe the propositions of His word, and live up to the rule of life prescribed there, and not expect to have their curiosity satisfied by needless and extraordinary revelations. But is there then no need of the gospel to bring men to heaven? Doubtless there is, but that is included in Moses and the prophets, who all prophesied of Christ, though more darkly

than he is revealed in the New Testament. *Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me, Joh 5:39,46, Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me:* now they at that time had no Scriptures to search but those of Moses and the prophets; for the New Testament was not at that time written.

Luke 16:30

Ver. 30,31. How vain is man in his imaginations: We are prone all of us to think after the rate that this rich man is here brought in speaking; that although persons be deaf to the sound of the word, yet some sensible evidence of the wrath of God would make a change in their hearts and lives. There is no such thing. There is not, possibly, in all the book of God a text that more speaks the desperate hardness of a sinner's heart than this, nor a text which looks more dreadfully upon persons sitting under the means of grace, reading and hearing the word of God, and yet find not their hearts so affected with the reading and hearing of it, as thereby to be brought to repentance, and faith, and such holiness of life as it requireth. If it were possible that such men and women should see one come out of the bottomless pit, tearing his hair, and wringing his hands, and gnashing his teeth, and bewailing his misery, and begging of them to be wise by his example, telling them for what sins he is made so miserable, and with tears and highest expressions of passion beseeching them that while they have time they would leave off those courses, acquaint themselves with God, and be at peace, that thereby good might come unto them, they would not yet believe nor repent; nor would this have any further effect upon them, than a little passion, till they could get the din out of their ears. For though sensible evidence be the highest advantage in the world to moral persuasion, yet these things are under no Divine appointment to such an effect. Henceforth let us wonder no more that a drunkard sees his companion drop down dead before him, yet presently cries again, Fill the glass; that hundreds of sinners are daily hurried down to hell in their wickedness, and yet their companions take no warning. In a fight at sea or land hundreds drop, yet their companions do not fly, but are held up by their stomachs and passion, and their ears are made deaf by the noise of the drums and trumpets. So in the world hundreds of sinners drop down daily into the pit, yet the rest of their companions tumble their companions

into their graves, and never consider the work of the Lord, nor consider the operation of his hands, till they also like sheep be laid in the grave, and death comes to feed upon them, and hell to devour them also. This now to those that duly consider not things, and in particular do not consider this text, seemeth strange and amazing. But it is no more to be wondered at than that hundreds read and hear the word of God, and are not by it converted and changed. It is not to be expected that any providence of God should work upon those souls any saving change, upon whom the word doth not work. That is the ordinance of God, with which the Holy Spirit joins itself, which alone can produce this change. If God works not this change thus, he will work it by nothing else; though he sometimes maketh use of such providences towards souls to whom he intends good, to make them observe and attend to the word better, in order to so blessed an effect.

Luke 17:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 17:1,2 Christ teacheth to avoid giving occasions of offence,

Lu 17:3,4 and to forgive one another.

Lu 17:5-10 The power of faith, and defect of merit toward God in our best services.

Lu 17:11-19 Christ healeth ten lepers,

Lu 17:20,21 showeth the spiritual nature of the kingdom of God,

Lu 17:22-37 and instructs his disciples concerning the coming of the Son of man.

Ver. 1,2. See Poole on "Mt 18:6". See Poole on "Mt 18:7". See Poole on "Mr 9:42". This term *σκανδαλα* is used in the New Testament very variously; in general it signifies any thing which may be an occasion of mischief to another. Man, consisting of body and soul, may by something be made to stumble and fall, either with reference to the one, or to the other: thus, Le 19:14. *Thou shalt not put a stumblingblock before the blind*: מבשיל Hebrew: so Pr 24:17. The mischief done to our souls is by sin; so as in the New Testament it often signifies any action of ours by

which our brother is made to sin: which actions may be,

1. Good and necessary, and then the scandal is taken, not given. Or:
2. Wicked and abominable; hence we call some sins scandalous sins, such as give offence to others, and are examples alluring them to sin. Or:
3. Actions which in themselves are of an indifferent nature, neither commanded nor forbidden in the word. Our taking one part in these actions, rather than another, may be a scandal, that is, an offence.

What our Saviour here saith is certainly true concerning all these kinds of offences: considering the complexion of the world, and the corruption which is in man's hearts, *it is impossible but that offences will come*. But I must confess that I incline to think, that the *offences* primarily intended by our Saviour here are those of the second sort; and that by them are meant persecutions of the people of God; to the authors of which our Saviour denounces woe. So that our Saviour by this lets the world know, the special protection under which he hath taken his people; so as though he knew there would arise those who would hurt and destroy in his holy mountain, yet he declares that they shall not go unpunished, but they had better die the most certain death imaginable, (such must be the death of him who is thrown into the sea with a millstone about his neck), than to that degree expose himself to the vengeance of God; a guilt of that nature that there is not much more hope for him to escape God's vengeance, than there would be of a man escaping with his life whom we should see thrown into the sea with a millstone appendant to him. I do very well know that it is also highly dangerous to tempt or solicit a child of God to sin, either by our words or actions; but I do not think it the design of our Lord in this place so much to express that as the other.

Luke 17:3

Ver. 3,4. Matthew hath something of the same tendency in Mt 18:21,22, mentioning it as an answer to a question which Peter propounded to our Lord; but the circumstances of both relations are so different that I cannot think them the same, but do believe these words spoken at another time.

This doctrine of the forgiveness of our offending brother is pressed upon us in several places in the gospel and New Testament, and that upon the gravest arguments imaginable, Mt 6:15 18:35 Mr 11:26 Lu 6:37 Eph 4:32; from whence we may justly conclude it a duty of very high concernment for us both to understand and to live in the practice of. It signifies the laying aside of all thoughts or desire of revenge in our own cause. The precept is not exclusive of our duty in seeing the glory of God avenged upon murderers, &c.; nor yet of our seeking a just satisfaction, in a legal way, for wrongs done to us relating to our limbs or estate, so far as the person is able to do it; much less doth it require the making such a one as hath so injured us our intimate and bosom friend. That which it requireth is the laying aside all malice, or desire of revenge, upon our neighbour in a case wherein our own name or honour is concerned; and it is fitly joined to what went before, this malice, or desire of revenge, being the root of all the mischief that men voluntarily do one to another, especially of that which they do to the innocent servants of God.

Luke 17:5

Ver. 5. Though we be not to seek a connection of all those speeches of our Lord which are recorded by the evangelists, they sometimes heaping together many of his golden sayings, without so much as regard to the order of time when he spake them, or their dependence on each other; yet he that wisely observes the preceding discourse for charity, will easily observe an excellent connection of this verse with the former. No duty required of men and women more grates upon flesh and blood than this of forgiving injuries, nothing that the most of people find harder to put in practice; so as indeed where there is not a root of faith, this fruit will not be found. It is *faith which worketh by love*. Till the soul cometh steadily and fixedly to agree to those propositions of the word where this is required, as the indispensable will of God; nay, till it comes firmly to rest upon those promises, and hope for them, which are made to this duty; finally, till it comes to have received Christ, and forgiveness from him, and considers itself bound to forgive, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven it, Eph 4:32; it will hardly come up to the practice of this duty. Hence it is that unregenerate men are usually implacable, malicious, always studying revenge. Nay, so imperfect are the habits and workings of faith in

believers, that they often find it very difficult to forgive. The apostles therefore very properly pray, Lord, increase our faith after hearing this discourse. Others make the connection thus: Lord, we have now heard thee discoursing our duty as to love, now increase our faith, discourse to us something for the increase of that. But the former seemeth to be least strained. By the way we may observe from hence, that as the beginnings, so the increase, of our faith must be from God. In things truly and spiritually good, without him we can do nothing.

Luke 17:6

Ver. 6. Matthew hath in effect the same, Mt 17:20, though he saith, *ye shall say unto this mountain; See Poole on "Mt 17:20"*. I cannot be of their mind who think that our Saviour in this, and the parallel place, speaks only of a faith that works miraculous operations; the object of which must be a Divine revelation or promise made to particular persons, that they shall be able to do things (by the power of God) out of and beyond the ordinary course of nature. I do believe that in both texts our Lord designs to show the great honour he will give to the exercise of the grace of faith, so as nothing which shall be for the honour of God, and the good of those that exercise it, and which God hath promised, shall be too hard or great an achievement for it: yet will it not thence follow, that if we had faith, that is, a full persuasion, that God would do such a thing by us, and a rest and confidence in God relating to it, we might remove mountains, or cast sycamine trees into the sea; for no such faith in us now could have a promise for the object, so as such a persuasion would be no faith, but a mere presumption. But there are other things as difficult, for which all believers have promises: *Sin shall have no dominion over you. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you, &c.* And there are duties to be performed by us, as hard in the view of our natural eye as removing mountains; amongst which this of forgiving injuries is not the least, especially to some natural tempers. But, saith our Saviour, do not think it impossible to do: you have said well to me, Lord, increase our faith, for if you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, either so small as a grain of mustard seed, (if true), or so lively and working, that had such a principle of life in it as a grain of mustard seed, you might do any duty, resist any temptation, mortify any corruption; and you that have a power given you, and a promise made you, for working miracles, might say to this sycamine tree, Be removed, &c.

Luke 17:7

Ver. 7-10. Lu 17:7-9 are plainly a parable, a part of a discourse wherein our Lord, under an earthly similitude, instructs us in a spiritual duty. This duty is easily learned from the *epiparabole*, Lu 17:10, and it lieth in two things:

1. That we ought to do all those things which our Lord hath commanded us.
2. That we, when we have done all, are to look for our reward, not of debt, but of grace.

He illustrates this by a similitude or parable. He supposes a man to have a servant ploughing or feeding cattle for him. By *servants* we must understand such servants as they had in those countries, who were not day servants, or covenant servants, who are only obliged to work their hours, or according to their contracts with us; but such servants as were most usual amongst them, who were bought with their money, or taken in war, who were wholly at their master's command, and all their time was their master's, and they were obliged by their labour only to serve him: such servants our Lord supposes to have been abroad in the field, ploughing, or sowing, or feeding cattle, and at night to be come in from their labour. He asks them which of them would think themselves obliged presently to set them to supper, (for meat, drink, and clothes were all such servants wages), or would not rather set them to work again, to make ready their master's supper, and then to wait upon him, tying up their long garments, which they used in those countries to wear, promising them that afterwards also they should eat and drink. And suppose they do that without murmuring, he asketh them again, whether they would take themselves obliged to thank them for doing the things which their master commanded? He tells them he supposes they would not take themselves to be under any such obligation. Now what is the meaning of *all this he tells them*, Lu 17:10, *So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants;* for the infinitely glorious and blessed God can receive no benefit by our services; *we have done that which was our duty to do*. By which we are instructed,

1. That we are wholly the Lord's, all our time, strength, abilities; we are obliged to love the Lord with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength.
2. That our labour for the Lord must not cease till the Lord ceaseth commanding, till we have done all that the Lord by his revealed will lets us know we have to do.
3. That when we have done all we shall have merited nothing at God's hands;
 - a) Because we are servants.
 - b) Because we have but done our duty.
4. That the Lord may delay our reward till we have done all that he hath commanded us.
5. That when we have it, it is not a reward of thanks, but of grace.

This parable is excellently added to the former discourses. Our Saviour had before pressed the doctrine of charity, he had also showed what must be the root of it, viz. true and lively faith; he here showeth us what we should propose to ourselves as our end in such acts, viz. not to merit at the hand of God, not merely in hope to receive a reward from him, but the glorifying of God by a faithful obedience to his will, owning him as our Lord, and ourselves as his servants, without any vain glory or ostentation, and in all humility confessing ourselves servants, unprofitable servants, and such as have but done our duty, no, though we had done all that he commanded us; waiting for our reward with patience, and taking it at last as of his free grace with thankfulness; which is indeed requisite to the true and regular performance of every good work which we do, and our duty, if the infirmity of our flesh would allow us to do all whatsoever God hath commanded us; but much more when our performances are so lame and imperfect, that the greatest part of what we do amounts not to the least part of what we leave undone.

Luke 17:11

Ver. 11-13. Christ's nearest way from Galilee to Jerusalem was through Samaria. In a certain town ten lepers met him, for though the law forbade them any other society, yet it did not restrain them from the society of each other; probably they were got together that they might at once come to this great Physician. The leprosy was a sore disease, not so much known in our countries. We shall observe it was the disease which God made to come upon some persons, to testify His displeasure for some sin committed by them. It was threatened as the mark of God upon men for sin, De 28:27 — *with the scab, whereof thou canst not be healed.* God sent it upon Miriam, Nu 12:10, for her contempt of Moses. David curseth Joab's house with it, 2Sa 3:29. Gehazi suffereth by it, for his lying and going after Naaman for a bribe, 2Ki 5:27. King Uzziah, for usurping the priest's office, 2Ki 15:5. These ten lepers cry to Christ for mercy, mercy with respect to their afflictions.

Luke 17:14

Ver. 14. It was according to the Divine law, Le 14:2, that the leper in the day of his cleansing should be brought unto the priest, who was to judge whether he was healed, yea or no, and to offer the offering there prescribed. Christ sends them to the priests, partly that he might observe the law which his Father had given in the case, partly that he might have a testimony of this his miraculous operation. We shall observe that our Saviour cured some being at a distance from them, some by the word of his power only, though he were present in the same place, others by touching of them; he certainly chose thus to vary his circumstances, in actions of this nature, to let people know that the healing virtue was inherent in him, and that the proceeding of it from him was not tied to any ceremony used at the doing of the work, which he used or omitted according to his pleasure.

Luke 17:15

Ver. 15,16. It is most probable that this leper first showed himself to the priest, according to the commandment and the direction of our Saviour, and then returned to give our Saviour thanks. Some think that this glorifying God here mentioned, and his giving thanks to Christ, signify the same thing. I doubt it, because nothing appeareth from this story sufficient to convince us that he looked upon Christ as God; nay, it doth not appear that his faith was risen so high as to believe him the Messiah, the Son of David; they speak to him only under the notion of *Jesus, Master*, Lu 17:13. It is plain they believed him at least to be a great prophet, sent from God, and clothed with a power from God. I choose rather therefore to interpret his falling down on his face at his feet, as a humble posture of reverence, which those nations did often use to compliment their superiors by, even as a posture of adoration; and that his glorifying God was a praising of him as the principal efficient cause of his healing, and his giving thanks to Christ a civil respect paid to Christ as God's instrument in the case. The evangelist addeth, and he was a Samaritan. Christ calls him a stranger, Lu 17:18 a *stranger* to the commonwealth of Israel, as all the Samaritans were.

Luke 17:17

Ver. 17,18. These ten lepers were a representation of all mankind; not more than one of ten that receive signal mercies from the bountiful hand of Divine Providence cometh to give God any suitable homage. Thus he maketh his sun to shine and his rain to fall upon the just and upon the unjust. Men howl to God upon their beds, but glorify him not when they are raised up. But this increpation of our Saviour lets us know, that this their way is their folly.

Luke 17:19

Ver. 19. It is a wonderful thing to observe what small rudiments and

embryos of faith Christ encourages and rewards. His faith appeareth to be no more than a persuasion that Christ did not do what things he did of this nature by any magical art, (as the Pharisee blasphemed), but by the power of God, and that he was a man sent of God. This faith Christ honours, commends, rewards. Faith is to be measured from the revelation which he who believeth hath, and from the opposition which he encounters: a little faith upon a little light, and maintained against a great opposition, is a great faith; though little in itself, yet great with respect to the circumstances of him or her that believeth.

Luke 17:20

Ver. 20. Whether the Pharisees spake this deriding him, who in his discourses had been often mentioning a kingdom of God to come, or in simple seriousness, for they generally expected the coming of a Messiah, and a secular kingdom, which he should exercise in the earth, particularly over the Jews, (having first destroyed the Gentiles), is very hard to determine; their mean opinion of Christ inclineth some to think the former; their generally received opinion about the kingdom of the Messiah giveth some countenance to the latter. Our Saviour's answer fitteth them, whatsoever they intended by their question: *The kingdom of God* (saith he) *cometh not μετα παρατηρησεως, with observation.* The word signifies a scrupulous and superstitious observation. Thus the verb from whence it cometh signifieth, Ga 4:10. The verb also signifies a captious observation, Mr 3:2 Lu 6:7 14:1 Lu 20:20 Ac 9:24. But that sense cannot agree to the noun used in this place. The generality of the best interpreters agree the sense here to be, with external pomp and splendour; and therefore Beza expounds the noun here by a periphrasis, *ita ut observari poterit*, in such a manner as it can be observed. As if he had said, Men have taken up a false notion of my kingdom, as if it were to be a secular kingdom to be set up in the world, with a great deal of noise, and pomp, and splendour, so as men may observe it and gaze upon its coming. But that which I call my kingdom is not of this nature. Our Lord expounds it in the next verse: *The kingdom of God is within you;* it is of a spiritual nature, not obvious to human senses, but exercised over the hearts of my people. Whether our Saviour speaketh this in reply to the Pharisees, or (as some think) beginning a discourse with his disciples, which he further pursueth, I cannot determine.

Luke 17:21

Ver. 21. The latter words of this verse seem fairly to admit of a double interpretation, as *you* here may signify the disciples of Christ, who had received Christ as their Lord, over whom he exercised a spiritual dominion and jurisdiction, or as it may respect the whole Jewish nation, amongst whom the kingdom of God was now exercised, by the preaching of the gospel, and the power of Christ put forth in the casting out devils, and other miraculous operations. I incline to the latter, as differing from those that think these words were spoken with a peculiar respect to the disciples; I rather think them a reply to the Pharisees, as corrective of their false notion and apprehension of the Messiah, as if he were yet to come, and to set up a temporal principality; for it is said, Lu 17:22, And he said unto the disciples, as if he did but then specially apply his discourse to them; εἰ ἡμῖν thus signifieth, Lu 7:16 Joh 1:14. You (saith our Saviour) are much mistaken as to the nature of my kingdom, and indeed of the kingdom of the Messiah, in the expectation of which you live. It is not a kingdom of the same nature with the kingdoms of the world, it cometh not with pomp: and splendour, for men and women to observe; they shall not say, Lo here he cometh! Or, Lo there he goeth! The kingdom of God is now in the midst among you, though you observe it not.

Luke 17:22

Ver. 22. Our Lord spendeth his further discourse in this chapter in a forewarning of his disciples of those great troubles which should follow His departure from them. At present the Bridegroom was with them, and they could not mourn; for many years after that he was departed from them *the days of the Son of man* continued, that is, gospel days, times wherein the gospel of Christ was freely preached to them. But (saith he) make use of that time, for it will not hold long; there will come a time *when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see it*. These evil days began when false Christs and false prophets rose up, which was most eminently a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened about forty years after. Every factious person that had reputation enough to make himself the head and leader of a faction, taking his

advantage of the common error of the Jews, that a Messiah, a Christ, was to come, who should exercise a temporal kingdom over the Jews, would pretend to be, and give out he was, the Messiah, to draw a faction after him. This is that which our Saviour saith in the next words.

Luke 17:23

Ver. 23,24. See Poole on "Mt 24:23", See Poole on "Mt 24:27". You will (saith our Saviour) have a great many false Christs and false prophets arise, and foolish credulous people will be deceived by them, and come and tell you, Lo, yonder is the Messiah, or, Lo, he is in another place; but believe them not. So it is in Mr 13:21. Follow them not, saith Luke. The Son of man shall have his day, a day when he will come in a glorious manner to judge the quick and the dead; but it will come upon the world like lightning, that suddenly shineth from one part of heaven to another, so as no man can foretell it, or observe the motion of it. Some do think that by *the day of the Son of man* here was meant the spreading of his gospel; but certainly it is a strained sense, nor was the spreading of that a thing so sudden, but more gradually and observably accomplished.

Luke 17:25

Ver. 25. Before my kingdom shall appear in that glory, *I must suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.* You may be seduced to think that I am going to put on a crown as a secular prince to deliver you from your enemies. Alas! I am going to a cross. I shall have a day, but this is mine enemies' day, and the power of darkness, both with reference to me and you. Look for nothing in or from this generation but to see me mocked, scourged, spit upon, buffeted, hanged upon a cross, rejected by men; these will be the issues of Divine providence as to this generation; look for better things hereafter, but look for no better from or in this generation.

Luke 17:26

Ver. 26-30. See Poole on "Mt 24:37", and following verse to Mt 24:39. Our blessed Lord in these verses doth both declare the surprisal of the Jews with that judgment which was coming upon them, and of the world with his coming in the day of judgment, (of which the destruction of Jerusalem was a type), and also forewarns them to take heed that they might not be surprised; he tells them, that *in the days of the Son of man*, (so that he speaketh of more than one day), the day of his power in the destruction of the Jews, and in the day of judgment, the antitype to the former, it shall be as in the days of Noah and of Lot. In the days of those men, neither the men of the old world, nor the men of Sodom, would hearken either to Noah or Lot, who were preachers of righteousness to them, and gave them examples of sober and holy lives; but gave up themselves to luxury, and lived in a careless regard of any thing God was doing, until the very day that Noah went into the ark, with his family, and the flood destroyed all the rest; and till the day that Lot went out of Sodom, and fire and brimstone came down and destroyed all those who were left in Sodom. So it would be before the final ruin of the world. Till the very days came, and men felt it, the generality of men would not believe it, nor make any preparation for it. But in our Lord's propounding these two great examples to them, he also lets them know their duty and wisdom, viz. to watch, and be upon their guard, with Lot to get ready to go out of Sodom, with Noah to prepare an ark upon this admonition which he gave them. There are no such signs of approaching ruin to persons or nations, as security, and the abounding of sin and wickedness, notwithstanding the warnings which God giveth them by his messengers.

Luke 17:31

Ver. 31. These words seem to relate singly to the destruction of Jerusalem. See Poole on "Mt 24:17", See Poole on "Mt 24:18", where we had the same. They only signify the certain ruin and destruction of the place, and are our Saviour's counsel to his disciples, not to linger, or promise themselves any longer security there, notwithstanding what any false Christs or false prophets should plainly tell them, but to make as much

haste away out of it as they possibly could.

Luke 17:32

Ver. 32. We have the story Ge 19:26. She *looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt*. Lot and his family leaving Sodom, she either looked back as not believing what the angel had said, or as moved with the miserable condition of the place, or as loath to leave her estate and goods; however, in disobedience to the command of God, Lu 17:17, *Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed*. God turneth her into a pillar of salt. It is a dreadful caution against unbelief, disobedience, worldly mindedness, contempt of God's threatenings, and keeping a love for the forbidden society of lewd and wicked persons.

Luke 17:33

Ver. 33. That is, whosoever, in disobedience to my command, shall use arts to preserve his life, shall lose it; and whosoever, at my command, shall be ready to lose it, shall preserve it, or if he loseth his breath, he shall preserve his soul. See Poole on "Mt 10:39", See Poole on "Mt 16:25", See Poole on "Mr 8:35".

Luke 17:34

Ver. 34-36. See Poole on "Mt 24:40", See Poole on "Mt 24:41". These verses seem to respect the day of judgment, and that dreadful separation which shall be in that day between the sheep and the goats. It is true also of Christ's day in the preaching of the gospel; but that seemeth not to be the sense of this text. They can hardly be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem; it was so universal as hardly any were there left.

Luke 17:37

Ver. 37. Concerning the sense of this proverbial expression, and the various application of it by interpreters, See Poole on "Mt 24:28". In our evangelist (where it is $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$, not $\pi\tau\omega\mu\alpha$, as in Matthew, the word there properly signifying a dead body, the word here a living body) it seems to be applied to Christ's glorious coming to judgment: Where I shall be, who am to be the Judge both of the quick and the dead, thither shall all the world be gathered before me, but my saints especially, who have eagles eyes, senses exercised to discern betwixt good and evil, to discern me as their Redeemer, and the true Messiah; according to that, Ps 1:5,6. *Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself.*

Luke 18:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 18:1-8 The parable of the unjust judge and the importunate widow.

Lu 18:9-14 The parable of the Pharisee and publican.

Lu 18:15-17 Christ's tenderness to the little children that were brought unto him.

Lu 18:18-23 He teacheth a ruler how to attain eternal life.

Lu 18:24-27 He showeth how hard it is for the rich to enter into the kingdom of God,

Lu 18:28-30 promises rewards to those who have foregone aught for the gospel's sake,

Lu 18:31-34 foretells his own death and resurrection,

Lu 18:35-43 and giveth sight to a blind man.

Ver. 1. This duty of praying always is inculcated to us several times in the Epistles, as may appear from those texts quoted in the margin, which we must not interpret as an obligation upon us to be always upon our knees praying; for thus our obedience to it would be inconsistent with our obedience to other precepts of God, relating both to religious duties and civil actions, neither was Christ himself always praying: but it either, first,

lets us know, that there is no time in which we may not pray; as we may pray in all places, *every where lifting up holy hands without doubting*, (as the apostle saith, I 1Ti 2:8), so we must pray at any time. Or, secondly, it is as much as, pray frequently and ordinarily; as Solomon's servants are said by the queen of Sheba to stand always, that is, ordinarily and frequently, before him, 1Ki 10:8; and the Jews are said always to have resisted the Spirit of God, Ac 7:51; that is, very often, for they did it not in every individual act of their lives. Or else, in every part of time; knitting the morning and evening (the general parts of our time) together by prayer. Thus the morning and evening sacrifice is called the *continual burnt offering*, Ex 29:42 Ne 10:33. Or, as it is in Eph 6:18, εν παντι καιρω, in every season, whenever the providence of God offers us a fair season and opportunity for prayer. Or mentally praying always, intermixing good and pious ejaculations with our most earthly and sublunary occasions. Or, having our hearts at all times ready for prayer, having the fire always on the altar, (as was required under the old law), though the sacrifice be not always offering.

And not to faint, which is the same with that, Eph 6:18, *watching thereunto with all perseverance*; and Col 4:2, *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same*. Not fainting either by reason of God's delay to give us the things we ask of him, or through laziness, and remission of our duty, before our life doth determine. This is now what our Saviour designs to teach us in this parable which followeth.

Luke 18:2

Ver. 2-8. We have here the parable, and the interpretation thereof, both, Lu 18:1, in the *proparabole*, or the words immediately going before it, and also in an *epiparabole*, or some words following it, which sufficiently explain our Saviour's scope and intention in it, viz. To assure his people, that though the Lord show a great deal of patience towards wicked men, who are the enemies of his people, and doth not presently answer their cries for a deliverance of them out of their hand; yet if they go on crying to him, he will most certainly at length deliver them. To this purpose he tells them a matter of fact, which either had happened, or might happen in the world.

There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, &c.: from hence he concludes, arguing from the lesser to the greater, and indeed there is an emphasis in every part of the comparison.

1. This was an unjust judge; God is a righteous Judge.
2. He did this for a stranger; God's people are *his own elect*.

Then he assures them, that God would *avenge them speedily*. We may from this discourse of our Saviour observe several things.

1. That all the wrongs and injuries which the people of God suffer in this life should make them fervent and frequent in prayer to God for redressing them.
2. That notwithstanding their prayers, God may bear with their enemies long, for so much time as they shall think a long time.
3. If God's people do not faint, but continue night and day crying to him, God will hear them, and avenge them of their adversaries.

The power that importunity hath upon sinful men, may confirm us in this thing, and ought to engage us to pray without ceasing and fainting.

Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? When Christ shall come to judgment, he will find very few whose hearts have not fainted; there will be multitudes who are fallen away, through the power that temptations have upon the frailty of human nature. By *faith* here seems to be understood the true and proper effects of faith, growing out of it as the fruit out of the root. This premonition of our Saviour also served for an excellent caution to his disciples, that they would watch, and take care that they might be none of that part of the stars of heaven, which by the dragon's tail should be cast down to the earth.

Luke 18:9

Ver. 9. By the term certain, or some, he unquestionably understandeth the Pharisees and their disciples, who (as we have all along in the history of the Gospel observed) were a generation of men who were eminently guilty both of a boasting of themselves, and a scorning and despising all others.

Luke 18:10

Ver. 10. Who these Pharisees, and who the Publicans, were we have had frequent occasions before to tell. The temple stood upon a hill, therefore they are said to ascend, or go up. They had in the temple set hours for prayer, as may be learned from Ac 3:1, at which some of all sorts went up to pay that homage unto God. Our Saviour mentions but two, having in it no further design than by this parable to inform His disciples, how much more acceptable to God the prayers of broken, humble, contrite hearts are, though the persons possessed of them be such as have been, or at least have been reputed, great sinners, than the prayers of those who are hypocrites, and proud, and come unto God pleading their own righteousness, in order to the obtaining of his favour.

Luke 18:11

Ver. 11. From hence we may observe that thanksgiving is a part of prayer. It is said he *prayed*, yet we read not of any one petition he put up. His standing while he prayed is not to be found fault with, (that was a usual posture used by persons praying), unless the Pharisee made choice of it for ostentation, that he might be the better taken notice of; which was too much their fault, Mt 6:5. Whether the term *προς εαυτον*, with himself, in this place, signifieth that he only prayed in his heart, or with a voice that could not be heard, or only that he prayed by himself, I doubt; for though our Saviour, who knew men's thoughts, could easily repeat his prayer, supposing it only mental, or at least with a voice not audible, yet this seemeth not to suit the humour of a Pharisee, whose whole design was to be taken notice of, seen, and heard by others. He saith, *God, I thank thee,*

that I am not as other men, extortioners, adulterers, &c. But was this blameworthy? May we not bless God for his restraining grace, not suffering us to run into, the same excesses of riot with other men? Doubtless it is both lawful, and our duty, provided:

1. That we speak truth when we say it.
2. That we do not come to plead this as our righteousness before God.

But this Pharisee:

1. Speaks this in the pride of his heart, in the justification of himself.
2. In the scorn and contempt of his neighbour.
3. Though he were guilty of as great sins as these, though of another kind.

In the mean time we observe, that he did not attribute this negative goodness, of which he had boasted, or that positive goodness, which he will tell us of by and by, to the power of his own will. He gives thanks to God for them.

Luke 18:12

Ver. 12. Twice in the sabbath, saith the Greek, but that is ordinary, to denominate the days of the week from the sabbath; the meaning is, twice between sabbath and sabbath. Those learned in the Jewish Rabbins tell us, that the Jews were wont to fast twice in a week, that is, the Pharisees and the more devout sort of them; once on the second, another time on the fifth day (which are those days which we call Monday and Thursday). From whence some tell us that Wednesday and Friday come to be with us fasting days or fish days. The Christians in former times, thinking it beneath them to be less in these exercises than the Jews, would have also two fasting days each week; and those not the same with the Jews, that they might not be thought to Judaize. If that custom had any true antiquity, I doubt not but they fasted after another rate than the papists or others now do, who pretend a religion to those days. But neither was the Pharisees practice, nor the practice of Christians, in this thing to be much admired or applauded.

For fasting was always used in extraordinary cases; and the bringing extraordinary duties into ordinary practice usually ends in a mere formality. It is a good rule, neither to make ordinary duties extraordinary or rare, nor yet extraordinary duties ordinary: the doing of the first ordinarily issues in the loss of them, and quite leaving them off; the latter, in a formal lifeless performance of them.

I give tithes of all that I possess. The emphasis lieth in the word *all*. Others paid tithes of apples, and some fruits of the earth (of which alone tithes were due); but the Pharisees would pay tithes of those things, as to which it was generally held that the law did not strictly require them, such as pot herbs, eggs, milk, cheese. Our Saviour bore them this testimony, that they paid tithes of *mint, anise, and cummin*, Mt 23:23; *rue, and all manner of herbs*, Lk 11:42. This Pharisee boasted of his exactness in two things, neither of which were required particularly by the law of God. Nor did he amiss in them, if he had not omitted the weightier things of the law, as our Saviour charges them to have done in both the texts before mentioned. But how came these things to make him a plea for his justification before God? Will he plead his righteousness, because he did things which God did not command him, while in the mean time he omitted those things which God had commanded? Or, what did these things signify; if they were not done out of a root of love? The law is, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*; and how could they be performed out of love, when love was one of the things which our Saviour charges them to have omitted? Of the same nature are other works, such as building of churches, and hospitals, and alms houses: the fruit is good, if the root be good; but if they be done out of ostentation, or opinion of meriting at God's hands, men's money (notwithstanding these things) will perish with them, for heaven is not to be purchased by our money.

Luke 18:13

Ver. 13. Those who fancy the publican stood afar off from the Pharisee, because the Pharisees would suffer none but those of their sect, at least none that were under such a notoriety of disrepute as the publicans generally were, to come near them, suppose him to have been a Jew (which is not impossible): if he were a Gentile, he must stand so far off as the court of the Gentiles was from the court of Israel. This publican's

humility in his address to God is described,

1. By his posture; he looked upon the earth, as one that thought himself not worthy to look toward heaven.
2. By his action; he *smote upon his breast*, as one full of sorrow and trouble.
3. By the matter and form of his prayer; he confesseth himself a *sinner*; he fleeth unto the free grace of God.

Here is not a word of boasting, that he was not such or such, nor yet that he did thus or thus. He confesseth himself *a sinner*, a miserable sinner, and fleeth to the free grace of God; thereby instructing us how to make our applications to God, disclaiming any goodness or righteousness in ourselves, and fleeing to the alone merits of Christ, and the free grace of God in and through him.

Luke 18:14

Ver. 14. Justified η εχθινοϋ, we translate, *rather than the other*; not that the other was at all justified by God; the other was justified by himself only, and those of his party. The publican was justified by God. It followeth, *for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased*, &c. It is another of our Saviour's sentences, often made use of by him, Mt 23:12, and in this Gospel, Lu 14:11. It is applied to the ordinary practice of men, but here to God in the ways of his providence; he resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. The blessed Virgin magnifies God on this account, Lu 1:51,52.

Luke 18:15

Ver. 15-17. See Poole on "Mt 19:13", and following verses to Mt 19:15, See Poole on "Mr 10:13", and following verses to Mr 10:16, where we before met with this piece of history.

Luke 18:18

Ver. 18-27. We have met with this story at large, Mt 19:16-26; and with (if not the same) very like to it. Mr 10:17-27. See Poole on "Mt 19:16", and following verses to Mt 19:26. See Poole on "Mr 10:17", and following verses to Mr 10:17. The history is of great use to us.

1. To show how far a man may go, that yet is a great way short of a truly good and spiritual state. He may know that nothing in this life will make him perfectly happy. He may desire eternal life, and salvation. He may go a great way in keeping the commandments of God, as to the letter of them. He may come to the ministers of the gospel to be further instructed. But herein he will fail, he will not come to Christ that he may have life, but fancy he should do something meritorious of it; he doth not aright understand the law, and that there is no going to heaven that way, but by the perfect observation of it, and therefore fancies himself in a much better state than he is.
2. It instructs us in this, that there is no coming to heaven by works, but by a full and perfect obedience to the whole revealed will of God.
3. That every hypocrite hath some lust or other, in which he cannot deny himself. This ruler's lust was his immoderate love of the world, and the things thereof.
4. That it is a mighty difficult thing for any persons, but especially such as have great possessions on earth, to get to heaven.
5. As difficult and almost impossible as it may appear to men, yet nothing is impossible with God. He can change the heart of the rich, and incline it to himself; as well as the, heart of the poor. The rich man hath more impediments; but be men rich or poor, without the powerful influence of God upon the heart, without his free grace, no soul will be saved.

Luke 18:28

Ver. 28-30. See Poole on "Mt 19:27" and following verses to Mt 19:30, See Poole on "Mr 10:28" and following verses to Mr 10:30. The difficulty is only to reconcile Lu 18:30 to God's providences. For the everlasting life promised in the world to come, that is matter of faith, and not so much as seemingly contradicted by any providence of God. But how many lose much for Christ, that in this life do not receive manifold more, or a hundredfold!

Answer. It is true, if we understood it *in specie*. But the promise is not so to be interpreted. It is enough, if they do receive much more *in valore*, in value upon a true and just estimation. And this every sufferer for Christ hath, either,

1. In a joy, and peace, and assurance of God's love, which is a thousand times more.
2. Or at least in a contentment of mind with that state into which the providence of God bringeth them: this also is much more, as any will judge it a happier state never to thirst, than to have much drink to satisfy the appetite.

Luke 18:31

Ver. 31-34. We shall afterward, in the history of our Saviour's passion, see all these things exactly fulfilled, and our Lord here assures his disciples, that it was but in accomplishment of all that was prophesied concerning the Messiah; nor was it any more than he had told them, Lu 9:22, and

again, Lu 9:44 Mt 20:17-19, Mr 10:32-34. Yet it is said, *that they understood none of these things*. The words were easy enough to be understood, but they could not reconcile them to the notion of the Messiah which they had drank in, they could not conceive how the Messiah, that should redeem Israel, should die, or be thus barbarously used by those whom he came to redeem, or save. We have great need to consider well what notions we entertain concerning the things of God. All this blindness and unbelief of the disciples was bottomed in the false notion of the Messiah which they had taken up. However, our Saviour thought fit to inculcate them, to prepare them against the offence they might take at them when the providence of God brought them forth. It is good for us to hear, though it be only for the time to come.

Luke 18:35

Ver. 35. This blind man was *Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus*, as Mark tells us, Mr 10:46. Matthew mentions two, the other two evangelists but one, as being more famous, either upon his own or his father's account.

Luke 18:36

Ver. 36-43. See Poole on "Mt 20:30", and following verses to Mt 20:34, See Poole on "Mr 10:46", and following verses to Mr 10:52, where this whole history is more fully opened. It is here again very remarkable, how much Christ attributes to faith: *Thy faith hath saved thee*, Lu 18:42, which can be no otherwise understood, than of faith as the condition that was required in the person to be healed, for it is most certain that Christ by his Divine power was the efficient cause of this blind man's healing; but he exerted this Divine power upon that exercise of faith which he discerned in the blind man, whose faith seemeth to be a degree higher than that of the leper's, Lu 17:13, who said no more than *Jesus, Master. Jesus, thou Son of David*, was much more than this. It speaks the blind man's persuasion, that Christ was the Messiah; for it was an uncontrolled tradition amongst the Jews, that the Messiah was to be the Son of David. Christ rewards the

least exercises of true faith, but much more the higher exercises of it. It doth not appear that this blind man was fully informed who the Messiah should be, viz. God man, but so far as he knew he professeth, he calleth Jesus the *Son of David*.

Luke 19:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 19:1-10 Christ visiteth Zacchaeus the publican.
Lu 19:11-27 The parable of a nobleman who left money with his servants to trade with in his absence.
Lu 19:28-40 Christ rideth in triumph into Jerusalem.
Lu 19:41-44 He weepeth over the city,
Lu 19:45,46 driveth the buyers and sellers out of the temple,
Lu 19:47,48 teacheth daily therein: the rulers seek to destroy him.

Ver. 1. *Jericho* was a very rich city, in the tribe of Benjamin, less than twenty miles distance from Jerusalem, (whither our Saviour was going), and less than eight miles distance from Jordan: See Poole on "Nu 22:1". It was the first place which Joshua sent persons to spy out, before he had conducted the Israelites over Jordan, Jos 2:1-24; he took it, Jos 6:1-27, and cursed the man that should rebuild it, for he burned it, Jos 6:24. He prophesied, that he who should go about to rebuild it, *should lay the foundation of it in his first born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son*; which accordingly fell out in Ahab's time, to one Hiel, a Bethelite, 1Ki 16:34. Through this town, or city, which now had been rebuilt many years, our Saviour passeth in his way to Jerusalem.

Luke 19:2

Ver. 2. We have had frequent occasions to hint, that the publicans were the gatherers of the public revenue for the Romans. Amongst them there was an order of superior and inferior officers: Zacchaeus was the chief of them that were in that commission.

And he was rich; which is not to be wondered at, considering his employment; and is particularly mentioned doubtless to magnify the grace of God towards him, of which we shall by and by hear more; as well as to let us know, that though it be a hard thing for a rich man to be saved, yet with God it is possible, as we heard before, as, that though publicans were most of them rapacious and exceedingly given to extortion, and the love of money commonly increaseth with the increase of men's estate, yet Christ can change the heart of such a man, and work it into a contempt of riches, and into a freedom to part with them at the command of Christ, or where they hinder the embraces of him.

Luke 19:3

Ver. 3,4. All this was but curiosity; he saw a great crowd passing by, and asks what was the matter. The people tell him, that it was Jesus of Nazareth, that famous Prophet, whose fame had filled Judea as well as Galilee. He hath a great curiosity to see him, and runs before to find out a convenient station; but perceiving the crowd was great, and knowing that he was too low of stature to look over all their heads so well as to satisfy himself, he climbeth up upon a sycamore tree, by the way side in which he knew that he must pass.

Luke 19:5

Ver. 5. I see no ground for their opinion who think that before this time Zacchaeus's heart was touched with any love or affection to Christ. The evangelist seemeth to represent Zacchaeus before this as a mere stranger to Christ, *he sought to see who he was.* But Christ's looks are healing looks,

there went virtue along with them to convert Zacchaeus, though a publican, and to recover Peter, who had denied his Master; but they must be such looks as carried with them a design to do good to souls. Christ looked upon thousands to whom his looks conveyed no spiritual saving grace. He that could heal by the hem of his garment touched, could change a heart by his look. How good a thing it is to be near the place where Christ is, whatever principle brings men thither! Provided men come not as the Pharisees used to come, to execute their malice. Zacchaeus was brought to the bodily view of Christ out of mere curiosity, but being there he receiveth a saving look from him. How many have had their hearts changed by gospel sermons, who never went to hear the preachers with any such desire or design! Christ's design may be executed in the conversion of sinners, though not ours. He is found of them that seek him not, and of those that inquire not after him. Preparatory dispositions in us are not necessary to the first grace. God can at the same time prepare and change the heart. Zacchaeus is the first man we read of to whose house Christ (not asked) invited himself, and in it did more for Zacchaeus than he expected. Oh the freeness and riches of Divine grace! Which seeketh not a worthy object, but makes the object worthy, and therefore loveth it. What a word was this, *Come down; for today I must abide at thy house!*

Luke 19:6

Ver. 6. Curiosity carried Zacchaeus up, but love to Christ bringeth him down; he therefore makes haste to come down, and he receiveth Christ joyfully, glad to entertain such a guest. When Christ cometh to any soul, he never brings any sorrow to it, nor any thing but glad tidings.

Luke 19:7

Ver. 7. *All* here must not be taken for every individual person, that is not to be presumed either of all the inhabitants of Jericho, or, much less, of all that were in Christ's company: amongst others Mary Magdalene was at this time in his company, who had no reason to murmur at that. But of what sort of people were these murmurers? The voice is the voice of Pharisees, who had often quarrelled at Christ for this, and of their disciples; for there were multitudes of the Jews that had drunk in the

superstitions of that faction, and were more afraid of keeping company with sinners, than themselves being so; of having fellowship with their excommunicates in their houses, than of having fellowship with their, or greater, works of darkness. Our Saviour had before answered this cavil, he will now come to show them they were mistaken in the man; that he whom they counted a sinner, was a better man than themselves generally were.

Luke 19:8

Ver. 8. See here the first effects of Christ's saving looks upon any soul. The soul presently begins to cry out with the prophet, Isa 6:5, *Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.* Zacchaeus is now made sensible of his covetousness, and hardness of heart towards the poor, of his extortion and oppression, and resolves upon an effectual reformation. Christ never looks any soul in the face, but he looks his scandalous sinnings out of countenance. Acts of charity and justice are the first fruits of true repentance. The world, and the love of it, go out of the heart as soon as ever the true love of Christ comes into it; the soul knows that it *cannot serve God and mammon*. In case of wrong done to others, there can be no repentance, nor (consequently) any remission, without restitution and satisfaction, so far as we know it, and are able.

I restore, saith Zacchaeus. True love to Christ never giveth him bare measure. God had no where required the giving of half a man's goods to the poor, nor the restoring of fourfold, except in case of theft, of which men were judicially convicted; in case of voluntary confession, the law was but for a fifth part, over and above the principal, its to which a person was wronged, Nu 5:7. In case an ox were stolen, the thief was to restore fivefold, and in case of a sheep stolen four were to be restored, if the person had alienated it; if it were found alive in his hand, he was to restore double, Ex 22:1,4. In other cases he was to restore but double, if it came to the sentence of the judge, Ex 22:9; but in case of a voluntary confession, He was only tied to a fifth part above the principal, and to bring a trespass offering to the Lord, Le 6:1-6. This was the case of Zacchaeus; being touched with the sense of his sin, he voluntarily confesseth, and promises the highest degree of restitution. But a true love in the soul to Christ thinks

nothing too much to do in the detestation of sin, or demonstration of itself in works which may be acceptable in the sight of God.

Luke 19:9

Ver. 9,10. It is the opinion of some, that by *house* is here to be understood Zacchaeus and his whole family. Nor can it be denied, but that God, when he poureth out the oil of grace upon the head of a family, maketh some of it to run down to the skirts of his garments. God's covenant was with Abraham and his seed. There is a blessing upon whole nations, and whole families, where the heads of them receive the gospel; but this is not to be extended beyond some gospel privileges, and the liberty of the means of grace. εωτηρια εγενετο (which we translate *salvation is come*) seemeth to signify much more than this. I had rather therefore interpret *this house*, the head of this house.

Forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. Here again a question ariseth, in what sense these words are to be understood, whether that he were the son of Abraham, as Abraham was the father of the Jewish nation, or as he was the father of the faithful, viz. of all those who believed, or should believe, in Christ. Those who think he was a Jew, suppose that the Romans did employ some Jews in their service, to gather the public revenue, which is not improbable, being no more than is done by all conquerors: they have also to countenance them,

1. That Zacchaeus is a name of Hebrew extraction.
2. That his mention of a fourfold restitution seemeth to have reference to the law of fourfold restitution, in case of a sheep stolen, and alienated, Ex 22:1.
3. That the Jews did not charge our Saviour for eating with a person uncircumcised, but a person that was a scandalous sinner.

These make these words to be a reason given by our Saviour why he was so kind to Zacchaeus, because he also was a *son of Abraham*, one of *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. If I could interpret σωτηρια, the means of salvation, I should incline to this sense also; but taking it to

signify saving grace, which brings men to a certainty of salvation, remission of sins, and the justification of the soul of this publican, I cannot but think that by *a son of Abraham* in this text is meant a true believer, which he might be, and yet be a native Jew also. Though all Israel did not obtain, yet the election amongst them did obtain, Ro 11:7. All were not Israel who were of Israel. *Neither*, (saith the apostle, Ro 9:7) *because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children*. Nor were they other than Jews to whom Christ said, Joh 8:39, *If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham;* and, Joh 8:44, *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do*. Our Saviour therefore in saying, *Forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham*, intendeth much more than that he was a native Jew, (if indeed he were so, for that is not certain), viz. that he was a believer, a son of Abraham considered as the father of the faithful; a genuine son of Abraham, rejoicing with him at the sight of his day, and believing with him, so as it was imputed to him for righteousness; and salvation is already come in a sure title, though not in actual possession, to every soul that is such a one.

For the Son of man (saith he) *is come to seek and to save that which was lost*. We had the same, Mt 18:11: See Poole on "Mt 18:11".

Luke 19:11

Ver. 11. We noted before, that Jericho was but a hundred and fifty furlongs from Jerusalem, (which were not twenty miles), and probably this discourse was upon the way when he was come nearer to it. But the principal occasion of the following parable was, his discerning of the opinion which possessed some of the company which went along with him, that the time was now at hand when the *kingdom of God should appear*; when Christ would put forth some eminent act of his power, in delivering them from the servitude they were in to the Romans, or in destroying the unbelieving Jews and Pharisees; or when his gospel should take a further place, and prevail in the world beyond what it yet had done. He therefore putteth forth a parable to them, wherein by a familiar similitude he lets them understand, that he was going away from them, but would come again, and then receive the kingdom: that in the mean time he would employ them, as his servants, with his goods, and when he came

would take an account what use and improvement they had made of them, and then he would both reward his friends and be revenged on his enemies. The parable followeth.

Luke 19:12

Ver. 12-27. The parable of the talents, which we had, Mt 25:14-30, is of great cognation to this parable, and the doctrine of it in many things is the very same; but the circumstances of that and this relation are so differing, as I cannot think that both Matthew and Luke relate to the same time. I know nothing that hinders, but that our Saviour might twice repeat a parable which in substance is the same. Not to insist upon the examination of the words used in the Greek, (which is a work fit only for critical writers), for the right understanding of this parable we have three things to do:

1. To inquire what special instruction our Saviour did in this parable intend to those who heard him at that time.
2. Who the persons are, represented in it under the notion of a nobleman and servants; and what the things are, represented under the notion of going into a far country, to receive a kingdom, distributing his goods, &c.
3. What general instructions from it may be collected, which inform us as well as those to whom our Lord at that time spake. The special instructions which our Lord in this parable seemeth by it to have given his disciples were these:
 - a) That they were mistaken in their notions or apprehensions of the sudden coming of Christ's kingdom in power and glory. He had first a great journey to go, and they had a great deal of work to do. Instead of reigning amongst them, and exalting them, he was going away from them for a long time.
 - b) That there would be such a manifestation of his kingdom in glory and power, when he should exalt and liberally reward his friends, and severely punish all such as should be his enemies. In order to these

instructions, he taketh up this parable, or speaketh to them in the use of this similitude.

- c) As to the aptness of it: The *nobleman* here mentioned was Christ, who shall hereafter be a King in the exercise of power and justice, and distribute eternal rewards and punishments; but in his state of humiliation in which he was when he thus spake to them, was but like a nobleman, a Son of man, though the chiefest of ten thousand.

His going *into afar country*, signifieth his going from earth to heaven.

To receive a kingdom; a kingdom of glory, honour, and power at the right hand of the Father. His returning signifies his coming again to judge the world at the last day. His calling his servants, and delivering to them ten pounds, signifieth his giving gifts unto men, when he should ascend up on high; gifts of several natures, but all to be occupied, used in a spiritual trade, for the advantage of our common Lord. Not that he giveth to all alike, (which it is manifest he doth not), for every passage in a parable is not answered in the thing which it is brought to represent or express. The citizens hating him, and sending a message after him, &c., signifies that the generality of the world are haters of Christ, and demonstrate their hatred by their refusal of his spiritual government and jurisdiction. His returning, and calling his servants to an account, signifies, that when Christ at the last day shall come to judge the world, he will have an account of every individual person, how they have used the gifts with which he hath intrusted them, whether they be longer time of life, more health than others, riches, honours, or more spiritual gifts, such as knowledge, utterance, wit, &c., or any trusty places or offices they have been in. The different account the servants brought in, signifies that men do not equally use the gifts with which the Lord blesseth them; some use them well, some ill; some bring honour and glory to God by the use of them, and that some in one degree, and some in another. Some bring him no honour or glory at all. The master's answer to them upon their accounts, lets us know that every man shall be rewarded according to his work. There will be degrees in glory, (though we cannot well open them), as well as of punishments. The unprofitable servant's excuse for himself, signifies the great itch of proud human nature to excuse itself, and lay all file blame of its miscarriages on God, either his severity, or his not giving them enough, &c. The king's answer, Lu 19:22,23, lets us know, that sinners will be

found to be condemned out of their own mouths: at the last day, God will be found a righteous God, and man will be found to be the liar. What the Lord further adds, Lu 19:24,26, lets us know God's liberality in rewarding his saints at last. What he saith Lu 19:27, concerning his enemies, assures us, that although God spareth men and women a long time, so long as while his Son is in the far country, while the heavens must contain him; yet in the day of judgment a most certain final ruin will be their portion. Hence we may easily gather what instructions are offered us in this parable.

1. That the state of Christ, when he shall come to judge the world, will be a far more glorious state than it was while he was here upon the earth. He was here in the appearance of a nobleman, but he shall then appear as a king.
2. That all the good things which we have in this life are our Lord's goods, put in trust with us to be used for his honour and glory.
3. That it must be expected that in the world there should be a great many rebels against Christ and his kingdom, a great many that shall say, *We will not have this man to rule over us.*
4. That some make greater improvements than others of what God intrusts them with for his honour and glory, and some make no improvement at all of them.
5. That Christ, when he cometh to judge the world, will have a strict account how men have used his goods, their time of life, or health, their capacities, honours, riches, trusts, parts, &c.
6. That those shall have the highest reward in glory who have made the highest improvements; but those who have made improvements in any proportion shall have their reward.
7. That proud and wretched sinners will think in the day of judgment to wipe their own mouths, and lay all the blame of their miscarriages on God.
8. That this is their folly, God will condemn them from their own vain

pleas.

9. That in the day of judgment unprofitable creatures will, besides the loss of those rewards which they might have received from God, have all their little satisfactions taken from them, in the enjoyments of which they dishonoured God.
10. That though proud sinners here oppose the law of God revealed to them, and will not suffer Christ to reign over them; yet his power they shall not be able to resist, they shall at the last day be slain before Christ's face, and become his footstool. He shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel, Ps 2:9 110:1, and who shall then deliver them out of his hand?

Luke 19:28

Ver. 28. Jerusalem (as we before noted) stood upon a hill; those that went to it therefore ascended. This going before the company was noted by Mr 10:32; here again Luke taketh notice of it; to let us know certainly with what alacrity our Saviour managed the business of man's redemption. He knew that he was at this time to be the sufferer, and to die at Jerusalem; to show that he was freely willing, he leadeth the way.

Luke 19:29

Ver. 29-34. See Poole on "Mt 21:1", and following verses to Mt 21:6. See Poole on "Mr 11:1", and following verses to Mr 11:6. We have discoursed there of Bethphage and Bethany, and whatever occurs in this history needing any explication.

Luke 19:35

Ver. 35-38. See Poole on "Mt 21:7" and following verses to Mt 21:9. See Poole on "Mr 11:7" and following verses to Mr 11:10. Both which evangelists (Mark most fully) describe this great triumph.

Luke 19:39

Ver. 39,40. How peevish were these wretched Pharisees, to envy our Saviour this little triumph, of coming into the city upon an ass's colt, with garments under him instead of a saddle, or any stately furniture and trappings, and attended by a company of poor people throwing their garments and boughs of trees in the way! Yet these they would have silenced. Our Saviour's reply, *If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out*, seemeth to have been a proverbial speech used amongst them, to signify a thing which could not be. This day was accomplished God's decree in that particular passage of providence, concerning our Saviour, which could not be defeated.

Luke 19:41

Ver. 41. Those who of old blotted out this sentence, as thinking that weeping was not becoming Christ's perfection, seem to have forgotten that he was perfect man, and a sharer in all the natural infirmities of human nature (if weeping upon the prospect of human miseries deserveth no better name than an infirmity, being an indication of love and compassion). Those who think that it was idle for him to weep for that which he might easily have helped, seem to oblige God to give out of his grace, whether men do what he hath commanded them, and is in their power to do, yea or no. Christ wept over Jerusalem as a man, having compassion for these poor Jews, with respect to the miseries he saw coming upon them; as a minister of the gospel, pitying the people to whom he was primarily sent.

Luke 19:42

Ver. 42. Speeches which are the products of great passion, are usually abrupt and imperfect: *If thou hadst known*, that is, Oh that thou hadst known, or, I wish that thou hadst known. We are said in Scripture not to know more than we believe, are affected with, and live up to the knowledge of. They had heard enough of the things which concerned their peace, Christ had told them to them, but they attended not to them, they believed them not, and so cared not to direct their lives according to any such notions.

At least in this thy day; the time in which I have been preaching the gospel to thee (for so I had rather interpret it, than of this last journey of our Saviour's to Jerusalem). This was properly the Jews day, for the first preachers of the gospel spent all their time and pains amongst them.

The things which belong unto thy peace, that is, to thy happiness, for so the term often signifies, and it refers as well to the happiness of the outward as of their inward man.

But now they are hid from thine eyes: God will not suffer his Spirit always to strive with man, because he is but flesh, not fit to be always waited on by the great Majesty of heaven. First men shut their eyes against the things

that do concern their peace, then God hideth them from them. No man hath more than his day, his time of grace: how long that is none can tell: if he sleepeth out that, his case is desperate, past remedy.

Luke 19:43

Ver. 43,44. It is a plain prophecy of the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies, which came to pass within less than forty years after. The cause of that dreadful judgment is assigned, *because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation*. God's visitations are either of wrath or mercy; of wrath, Ex 32:34 Le 26:16 Jer 15:3; of mercy, Jer 29:10. It is plain that our Saviour useth the term here in the latter, not the former sense; and that by God's visitation of this people here, is meant his visiting them with his prophets, by John the Baptist, and by himself. Their not knowing of it (here intended) was their not making use of it, not receiving and embracing the gospel. The contempt of the gospel is the great, cause of all those miseries which come upon people in this life, or shall come upon them in that life which is to come.

Luke 19:45

Ver. 45,46. We have met with this before more fully: See Poole on "Mt 21:12". See Poole on "Mt 21:13". See Poole on "Mr 11:15", and following verses to Mr 11:17.

Luke 19:47

Ver. 47,48. This our Saviour's preaching *daily* must be understood of a very few days, for it appeareth from Joh 12:1, that he came to Bethany but six days before the passover; now upon the passover day he died; but for the intermediate time, it is plain from the other evangelists that he was wont to spend the day time at Jerusalem in the temple, and at night to return to Bethany.

The chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, only they stood in a little awe of the people, who were very attentive to hear him.

Luke 20:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 20:1-8 Christ silences those who questioned his authority.

Lu 20:9-18 The parable of the vineyard let out to wicked husbandmen.

Lu 20:19-26 The chief priests and scribes seek matter against him: his reply to their insidious question concerning: paying tribute to Caesar.

Lu 20:27-40 He confuteth the Sadducees concerning the resurrection.

Lu 20:41-44 He propounds a difficulty concerning the character of Christ.

Lu 20:45-47 He warns his disciples against the ambition and hypocrisy of the scribes.

Ver. 1,2. We have along the history of the gospel observed, that the scribes and Pharisees took all advantages imaginable against our Saviour: failing in all their acts, they now come to question his authority, which seemeth not so much to have respect to his preaching, as to his act in casting of the buyers and sellers out of the temple; for as to preaching, they seem, by the history of Scripture, to have given a great liberty, especially if any had the repute of a prophet.

Luke 20:3

Ver. 3-8. See Poole on "Mt 21:24", and following verses to Mt 21:27. See Poole on "Mr 11:29", and following verses to Mr 11:33. The substance of our Saviour's answer is this: From whence had John his authority? He preached and baptized; who gave him his authority? They had sent much

such another message to John, Joh 1:19-22. Was John's authority ordinary or extraordinary? It is plain that he had no authority from them, for then they would not have sent to him to know who he was. He must therefore have it from heaven. Now if they had allowed John's call extraordinary, why should not they allow Christ's to be such, to whom John gave so large a testimony, and who confirmed his extraordinary mission by miraculous operations, which we do not read that John ever did? Besides, the Pharisees saw that if they allowed John's mission to be extraordinary, and from heaven, they had obviously exposed themselves to a check for not believing what he said; they therefore refuse to make any answer, and Christ refuseth also to satisfy them.

Luke 20:9

Ver. 9-18. We met with this parable at large both in Mt 21:33-41, and in Mr 12:1-11. Its obvious scope is to let them know, that God in righteous judgment, for the Jews' abusing the Lord's prophets, John the Baptist, and himself, who was in a few days to be killed by them, would unchurch and destroy them, and raise up to himself a church amongst the Gentiles; and that this was no more than was prophesied of, Ps 118:22.

Luke 20:19

Ver. 19,20. There is nothing in these verses, but what we before met with, and is opened in the notes on Mt 21:45,46, or Mr 12:12,13. They let us see as in a glass the spirit and genius of wicked men filled with malice against the gospel. They are continually seeking to destroy such as have any relation to Christ, and, to effect their ends, they will judge no means unfair; and their great art is to represent them as dangerous persons to the civil government: so as if good men find the same things still, they have this to comfort them, that *the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.*

Luke 20:21

Ver. 21-26 This piece of history we have likewise met with, both in Mt 22:16-22, and Mr 12:14-17.

Luke 20:27

Ver. 27-38. See Poole on "Mt 22:23", and following verses to Mt 22:32, See Poole on "Mr 12:18", and following verses to Mr 12:27, where all the passages in this piece of history are fully opened. By *equal unto the angels*, in Lu 20:36, we must not understand in all things, but in the thing mentioned:

1. The number of the elect shall be perfect, so there shall be no need of marrying, or giving in marriage, to multiply the number of men.
2. There shall be no more marriages amongst men than amongst angels; *all live unto God*, Lu 20:38. Though Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead at the speaking of those words, yet they were not so in God's eye, who was determined to raise them up in the last day, and who with the same eye beholds things past, present, and to come. But see more in the notes

before mentioned.

Luke 20:39

Ver. 39,40 The scribes were the Jewish doctors of the Pharisees faction, and enemies to the Sadducees; they applaud our Saviour's answer: thus as the Herodians before, (in the case of the tribute), so the Sadducees here, are put to silence. He will now put the scribes and Pharisees to silence.

Luke 20:41

Ver. 41-44. The answer had been easy if the scribes and Pharisees, who (Matthew saith) were there also, had owned Christ to be the Son of God. But this they did not own, and so, as Mt 22:46 tells us, *No man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.* Thus Christ nonplussed all his adversaries.

Luke 20:45

Ver. 45-47. We have met with all this before, See Poole on "Lu 11:43". See Poole on "Mt 23:6". See Poole on "Mt 23:7". See Poole on "Mr

12:38", and following verses to Mr 12:40.

Luke 21:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 21:1-4 Christ values the poor widow's two mites above all the larger offerings of the rich,
Lu 21:5,6 foretells the destruction of the temple,
Lu 21:7-24 the signs and calamities that should precede and accompany it,
Lu 21:25-33 and what should happen at the time of the Son of man's coming.
Lu 21:31-38 He exhorteth to watchfulness and prayer.

Ver. 1-4. We met with this piece of history, Mr 12:41-44. Mark telleth us, that Christ was sitting right over against the treasury. For other things necessary to be known to understand this piece of history, See Poole on "Mr 12:41", and following verses to Mr 12:44.

Luke 21:5

Ver. 5,6. Matthew and Mark say, that some of his disciples spake these words to him, and received this answer, as he was going out of the temple. For the *goodly stones* which the disciples admired, we are told that there were some of them forty-five cubits long, five in depth, and six in breadth. The gifts here mentioned are called in the Greek, *αναθηματα*, not *αναθεματα*, nor *δωρα*. The latter word, *δωρα*, signified any gifts, money or plate, &c., which men voluntarily offered. *Αναθηματα* signified things accursed, or devoted to God, as all the goods of Ai were, Jos 7:1-26. But this word signified such gifts or presents made to God, as might be hung up and exposed to open view. Our Lord, to take off his disciples eyes from

those gay and stately things, prophesieth the utter ruin of the temple, to that degree that one stone should not be left upon another; which how it was afterwards fulfilled within less than forty years, See Poole on "Mt 24:1", See Poole on "Mt 24:2", and See Poole on "Mr 13:1", See Poole on "Mr 13:2". God by that providence not only destroying the vain confidence of the Jews, who took their temple to be an asylum, or sanctuary, for them from the providence of God, or his justice rather; but also severely punishing them for their profanation of his holy place; and also lets them know that the time was come, when God would put an end to all types of the Messiah, and also to all that worship, *which could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; but stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation,* Heb 9:9,10. See Poole on "Mt 24:1", See Poole on "Mt 24:2", and See Poole on "Mr 13:1", See Poole on "Mr 13:2".

Luke 21:7

Ver. 7. Mark saith, *Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately.* Matthew brings two things more within the compass of their question, viz. *What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?* Our Saviour answereth this question from Lu 21:8-32. The most of what he saith we have before met with in Matthew and Mark. It is the harder to distinguish between the signs Christ giveth of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the day of judgment, because the signs of both are generally the same, and most divines think that God in the destruction of Jerusalem intended to give a specimen of the general conflagration, and ruin of the world at the last day; so as signs of the same kind with those seen before Jerusalem was destroyed, shall be seen before the great and terrible day of our Lord's coming to judge the world.

Luke 21:8

Ver. 8. See Poole on "Mt 24:4", See Poole on "Mt 24:5", See Poole on "Mr 13:5", and See Poole on "Mr 13:6". This happened, and was abundantly fulfilled, before the destruction of Jerusalem, and probably will receive a

further fulfilling in the latter end of the world. But before the destruction of Jerusalem it was, as Josephus assures us, fulfilled in many, particularly:

1. In one Theudas, whether the same mentioned by Gamaliel, Ac 5:36, or some other of that name, is uncertain.
2. An Egyptian sorcerer, mentioned Ac 21:38.
3. One Dositheus, a Samaritan.
4. Another in the time of Festus's government.
5. Simon Magus is also reckoned for one, Ac 8:9. He boasted he was *the great power of God*. Others also reckon one Menander, a disciple of Simon Magus.

It is certain there were many who arrogated to themselves the name of the Messiah, to countenance their heading of a faction. There have also been many since the destruction of Jerusalem, and probably will be many more before the end of the world, 2Ti 4:3 2Pe 2:1 1Jo 2:18.

Luke 21:9

Ver. 9-11. See Poole on "Mt 24:6", See Poole on "Mt 24:7", and See Poole on "Mr 13:8". Time is the best interpreter of prophecies: what shall be seen of these before the end of the world we are yet to observe, but the destruction of Jerusalem is past many hundreds of years since. What commotions were before that, we must learn out of civil historians, who tell us of divers. Josephus telleth us of an insurrection made by those of Judea against the Samaritans, Romans, and Syrians; and of the Romans against the Jews, to the destruction of twenty thousand Jews: as also of those of Scythopolis, who destroyed of the Jews thirteen thousand; of the Ascalonites, who destroyed of them two thousand five hundred; of those of Alexandria, who destroyed of them fifty thousand; of those of Damascus, who slew of them ten thousand. They tell us also of many more seditions, during the government of Felix, Festus, Albinus, Florus, &c.

The text speaks further of *earthquakes*; the Greek word signifieth no more

than concussions and shakings, but historians tell us of several earthquakes that happened (though not in Judea) before the destruction of Jerusalem; one at Rome, in Nero's time; another in Asia, which destroyed three cities, &c.

For *famines*, we read of one in Scripture prophesied of by Agabus, [Ac 11:28](#). Twelve years after Christ's death, there was another in Greece; and four years after, at Rome.

For the *fearful sights, and great signs from heaven*, Josephus tells us of a comet, which for a year together in the form of a sword pointed over the city; a light that shined in the night in the temple, and made it as bright as if it had been noon day. He tells us also of a neat beast bringing forth a lamb in the midst of the temple; of the strange opening of the gates of the temple; of visions of chariots and armed men; of a voice heard in the temple, inviting those who were there to be gone; as also of a man (whom he names) who for seven years and five months together before the siege went about crying, *Woe, woe to Jerusalem!* And could with no punishments (which they thought fit to inflict) be restrained, &c. These were great signs both from heaven and earth.

Luke 21:12

Ver. 12. We have all this justified from holy writ, [Ac 4:3](#) [Ac 5:18](#) [Ac 7:4](#) [16:24](#). What of this shall be seen before the end of the world, time must show; though the prophecies of holy writ speak enough of that also.

Luke 21:13

Ver. 13. That is, your persecution shall *turn to you for a testimony*: for a testimony against your adversaries; so as they themselves shall be brought by your confession of me to own me as the true Messiah; and their cruelty, which they mask under the vizard of religion, shall be openly detected, and it shall at last appear to all the world, that the judgments of God are just, for the cruelty they have exercised upon you. And to you it shall be for a

testimony; you shall have a more ampler occasion of testifying, both before kings and great men, that I am the true Messiah. Your faith, patience, and constancy shall be made more manifest; you shall also testify that my kingdom is not of this world, and that my disciples care not to expect a terrene felicity. They shall also be a testimony to you, that you expect not your portion and felicity in this, but in another life.

Luke 21:14

Ver. 14,15. See Poole on "Mt 10:19", See Poole on "Mt 10:20", See Poole on "Mr 13:11". We must not think that our Saviour by this forbids us what is naturally impossible for us to avoid, that is, the forming of those words first in our thoughts which we speak, nor yet a prudent thinking beforehand what we should speak; but an anxious thinking what we should speak, such a thinking as should argue a distrust in God to carry its through with that testimony which he calleth us forth to give.

For, saith he, I will give you a mouth and wisdom. So he promised Moses, that he would be with his mouth, and teach him what to say, Ex 4:12,15. And he tells Ezekiel, that he would open his mouth, Eze 3:27. Here he promises the disciples *a mouth and wisdom*, that is, such wisdom as should guide their tongues when they should be called out to testify for him. This was made good to Stephen, Ac 6:9,10; *the Libertines, Cyrenians, Alexandrians, those of Cilicia and Asia, were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake.* Thus it fared with Peter and John, Ac 4:8-13.

By *resist* we must understand conquer, or victoriously resist. The enemies of the gospel have been always opposing and resisting the patrons and witnesses of and for the truth, but never yet made a conquest: let any indifferent reader but read, and judge the accounts we have of the conflicts between the papists and the protestants in the beginning of the Reformation, or between the papists and the martyrs in Queen Mary's days in this nation, and judge on whose side there was most Scripture and reason. This promise hath been fulfilling from Christ's time even to this day. It is true, the enemies have been able to kill the persons of Christ's disciples; they stoned Stephen, killed James with the sword, Ac 7:12; they crucified Peter and Andrew, stoned Philip, banished John into Patmos,

flayed Bartholomew, beheaded Matthew, and various ways destroyed many in the first and most furious times, and have slain many thousands since; but the truths which they preached prevailed.

Luke 21:16

Ver. 16,17. See Poole on "Mt 24:9", See Poole on "Mt 24:10", See Poole on "Mr 8:12", See Poole on "Mr 8:13".

Luke 21:18

Ver. 18. It is a proverbial speech, signifying that they should have no hurt or damage by any thing which their enemies should do against them. When at the last you come to cast up your accounts, you shall find you have lost nothing, and your enemies shall also find that they have gained nothing.

Luke 21:19

Ver. 19. Patience is either passive, seen in a quiet, free, and courageous suffering those evils which God will please in his providence to order us for our portion; or active, seen in a quiet believing, waiting for, and expectation of what God hath promised.

Possess your souls, that is, yourselves; do not decline suffering for my name's sake, but live in the exercise of Christian courage and fortitude until the Lord will please to release you. In this sense James expounds this phrase, Jas 1:4, *But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.* Others say, *possess your souls* is the same with *save your souls*. So it seems to be expounded by Mt 24:13, and Mr 8:13, *But he that shall endure to the end shall be saved.*

Luke 21:20

Ver. 20-22. After our Saviour's ascension, the seditions amongst the Jews were so many, and they rebelled so often against the Romans, during the governments of Felix, Festus, Albinus, and Florus, that the Romans resolved wholly to destroy them, and to that purpose Titus Vespasian was sent with an army against them, who took the city. Our Saviour foresaw, that when that time should come there would be some vain persons full of stomach for their liberties, that would be prophesying their deliverance, and encouraging them to hold out to the last. He warns his disciples to give no credit to them, for God would certainly deliver the city into their hands; therefore he advises them, as soon as they should see the city besieged, they should all shift for themselves as first as they could, for there was no true ground to hope for any deliverance. The time of God's vengeance was come, when God would most certainly fulfil against that place whatsoever he had foretold against it.

Luke 21:23

Ver. 23,24. Josephus tells us, that in the wars which ended in the taking of Jerusalem, by the famine and the sword there perished one million one hundred thousand Jews, and ninety seven thousand were carried into captivity. Jerusalem ever since that time hath been *trodden down by the Gentiles*, the Romans, Saracens, Franks, and is at this day trodden of the Turks.

Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Some from this text think, that there shall be a time when the Jews shall repossess the city of Jerusalem. Whether any such thing can be from hence gathered, I doubt. Some here by the *times of the Gentiles* understand all that time between the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. Others, the time when the gospel should be carried over all the world. But their opinion seemeth to me most probable, who interpret it of the time of God's patience with the Gentiles. As the Jews have filled up their measure, and now the wrath of God is come upon them to the uttermost, so the Gentiles shall have their time also. The Romans have had their time, the Turks now have their time;

but their glass is also running out, there will be a fulfilling of their time too, and whether then another sort of barbarians shall possess it, or the Jews or Christians shall recover it, time must interpret.

Luke 21:25

Ver. 25,26. We may easily imagine, that this was eminently fulfilled in the siege of Jerusalem, that men's hearts failed them for fear; and for prodigies, we are told of enough, both by Josephus and Tacitus, the latter tells us, that armies were seen fighting in the air with glistening armour, and the temple seemed all as on fire with lightning; he also tells us of the voice heard, and throwing open of the doors of the temple, before mentioned; but tells us few were affected, but built hopes upon a tradition they had, That now was the time *ut valesceret Oriens*; which was true enough, but not in their sense. But what is spoken here certainly relates to the day of judgment, before which prodigious things will be seen, 2Pe 3:10,12; and it follows, (see Lu 21:27,28).

Luke 21:27

Ver. 27,28. Matthew seemeth to expound this, Mt 24:31; so doth Mr 13:27. Both speak to the same sense: *And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from, one end of heaven to the other.* This is certainly to be understood of the day of judgment, when the saints shall be glorified as the sons of God by adoption, and obtain the redemption of the body, Ro 8:23.

Luke 21:29

Ver. 29-33. We had this same parable both in Matthew and Mark. See Poole on "Mt 24:32", and following verses to Mt 24:35. See Poole on "Mr 13:28", and following verses to Mr 13:31.

Luke 21:34

Ver. 34-36. I take the Lu 21:34 to be a good exposition of the term *watch*, Lu 21:36. Avoid sin industriously, in a prospect of my coming to judgment: for sin is compared to sleep, Ro 13:11 Eph 5:14; and as he that watcheth doth not only wake, but setteth himself designedly to forbear sleep, in order to some end; so he who keepeth the spiritual watch must set himself designedly to avoid sin, upon a prospect of Christ's coming, and the uncertainty of it. Particularly he cautions his disciples against luxury and worldly mindedness. The first he expresses under the notions of gluttony and drunkenness, which are two eminent species of it.

The latter, under the notion of the *cares of this life*; not necessary and provident cares, but superfluous and distracting cares. These things he presseth them to avoid, lest they should be surprised by Christ's coming, as he tells them the most of the world would be.

He further exhorteth them to *pray always*; the sense of which precept we showed largely in our notes on Lu 18:1.

He further presseth both these duties in those words, *That ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass*; those that should come to pass at or before the destruction of Jerusalem, or afterward; *and to stand before the Son of man*, that is, in the last judgment; for, *The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*, Ps 1:5.

Luke 21:37

Ver. 37,38 In these two verses our evangelist letteth us know how Christ spent those few days which he had yet to live. In the day time he was in

the temple preaching; in the evening he was on the mount of Olives praying; to teach all those, who as under shepherds derive from him, who is the true and chief Shepherd, how they should spend their time, preaching and praying. Though the scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees, and the chief of the Jews, maligned and despised him, yet many of the people paid him a due respect, and *came early in the morning to hear him*. In the world's reception and entertainment of Christ, that of the apostle was verified, *Not many rich, not many wise, &c.; but the poor of this world hath God chosen*.

Luke 22:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 22:1,2 The chief priests and scribes conspire against Christ.

Lu 22:3-6 Judas covenants to betray him.

Lu 22:7-18 The apostles sent to prepare the passover: Christ eateth it with them,

Lu 22:19,20 and institutes his last supper.

Lu 22:21-23 He covertly points out the traitor,

Lu 22:24-30 cheeks the ambitious strife of his disciples, and promises them a share in his kingdom.

Lu 22:31-34 He telleth Peter of Satan's desire to sift him; but that his faith should be supported; and yet he should thrice deny him.

Lu 22:35-38 He advises his disciples to provide necessaries and a sword.

Lu 22:39-46 His agony and prayer in the garden.

Lu 22:47-49 He is betrayed,

Lu 22:50-53 healeth a servant of the high priest, whose ear was cut off,

Lu 22:54-62 is lead to the high priest's house; Peter thrice denieth him.

Lu 22:63-65 Christ is scornfully used,

Lu 22:66-71 and brought before the council, where, confessing himself to be the Son of God, he is pronounced guilty of blasphemy.

Ver. 1,2. See Poole on "Mt 26:1" and following verses to Mt 26:5, See Poole on "Mr 14:1", See Poole on "Mr 14:2".

Luke 22:3

Ver. 3-14. See Poole on "Mt 26:14", and following verses to Mt 26:19. See Poole on "Mr 14:10", and following verses to Mr 14:16.

Luke 22:15

Ver. 15-23. See Poole on "Mt 26:20", and following verses to Mt 26:30, where is opened whatsoever Luke hath that is not in the other evangelists.

Luke 22:24

Ver. 24. Luke only taketh notice of this strife at the time of their being in

the guest chamber. Such a strife we read of, Mt 18:1 20:25,26 Mr 9:33 and in this Gospel, Lu 9:46; by which it is apparent, that they had been more than once arguing this point. But yet most interpreters think that it is here placed by Luke out of order and some translate *εγενετο* in this text, *there had been*, not, *there was*; and indeed we can hardly think so uncharitably of the apostles, as to imagine of them, that immediately after their receiving, first the passover, then the Lord's supper, their thoughts should be taken up with things of this nature, much less that they should discourse of any such subjects as these; especially also considering what our Saviour had told them, that he was betrayed into the hands of sinners. Something of our Saviour's answer, pressing upon them brotherly love, and mutual serviceableness each to other, was very proper to this time, which our Saviour (though spoken before) might at this time repeat, and Luke prefactorily to it might take notice of this contest in this place.

Luke 22:25

Ver. 25-27. See Poole on "Mt 20:25", and following verses to Mt 20:28. The sum is, our Saviour hereby teacheth all his disciples (his ministers especially) to avoid affectation of rule and dominion, as that which became heathens rather than Christians, and the kings of the Gentiles rather than the ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ. This text giveth no countenance to the levelling of all orders of men. Magistracy is an ordinance of God, and ought to be upheld. Order also in the church is to be observed, for God is the God of order; but no minister of Christ ought to affect great titles, nor to exercise a dominion or lordship. Our work is to *feed the flock of God, taking the oversight of them, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock, 1Pe 5:2,3.* Not for that we have dominion, over your faith, but are helpers of your joy, 2Co 1:24. That the ministers of Christ may not have titles given them, speaking honour and reverence due to them, I do not know. But the reason is obvious why they should not affect them to be fond of them; for pride is a vain and vicious affection, and more culpable in them than others. Their works are but a ministration to the church, in putting the laws of Christ relating to it in execution, and it is their greatest honour to be humble. Nor doth this at all degrade a minister of Christ, for even Christ himself, while he was upon the earth, was not as one that sat at meat, but as one that served.

Luke 22:28

Ver. 28-30. These verses seem to contain (though in a few more words) the substance of what we met with Mt 19:28. There they are spoken as an answer to Peter, speaking on the behalf of himself and the rest of the apostles, who had forsaken all to follow Christ. Christ tells them there, that those *which had followed him, in the regeneration when the Son of man should sit on the throne of his glory, should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel*. That time which our Lord there calleth the regeneration, is the time when he had been giving a new birth to the church, reforming the world by his doctrine and holy example. That time he here calleth the time of his temptations, by which he meaneth trials, afflictions, and persecutions, as the word is often taken in holy writ, Ga 4:14 Jas 1:12 2Pe 2:9 Re 3:10.

To those of the disciples (they were eleven of the twelve) he promises *a kingdom*, a state of great honour and dignity, as his Father had appointed him; and therefore they might satisfy themselves with the titles and qualities of ministers and servants while they were here, and be content to meet with troubles and temptations, as he had done, to hunger and thirst, &c.; when that time came which he had appointed, they should then eat and drink at his table, they should sit also upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Terms expressive of that rest and satisfaction, that glory, honour, and dignity, which the saints in God shall in heaven be possessed of.

Luke 22:31

Ver. 31,32. Our Lord directeth his speech to Peter, as one who (as it will by and by appear) had a greater confidence of himself than the rest expressed, and as one who he foresaw would fall more foully than the rest; though it appears, that in his speech he had a respect to them all, for the

word *you* is in the plural number. The devil had a mind to disturb them all by his temptations (that is here called sifting). Christ hath his fan in his hand, and will sift his church, but his sifting is to purge his floor; he sifts a particular soul, to purify it from its lusts and corruptions; but Satan sifts the soul and the church merely to give them trouble, and to keep them from rest and quiet by continual motion and agitation. This we are all concerned to take notice of, that we may both be continually prepared for the time of our siftings, and bless God who doth not satisfy Satan's desires to sift his; for he hath the same mind to winnow us now, that he had to sift Peter and the rest of the apostles.

But (saith our Saviour) *I have prayed that thy faith fail not.* There is a total and a partial failing of faith. Peter's faith did fail in part; but the seed of God did yet abide in him, his faith did not wholly fail: so will it be with the faith of every true disciple of Christ. In hours of great temptation and trial, their faith may, as to some degrees, fail, but totally it shall not: they may be perverted, but they shall again be converted. As the apostles saith of the bodies of the saints, Ro 8:10,11, *And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you:* may also be said of their souls. They have in them a body of death, and they may in act hour of great temptations fail, and their gracious habits may seem to die. But if the Spirit of God dwelleth in the soul, he will again quicken their souls by his Spirit which dwelleth in them.

And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren; that is, when God hath recovered thee from thy fall, and made thee to see thy error, make an improvement of thy recovery out of the snare of the devil, by admonishing others to take heed of too much confidence in themselves, and encouraging them not to despair, though they also may fall into temptation; but that the grace of God shall be sufficient for them.

Luke 22:33

Ver. 33,34. This is more largely recorded by Mt 26:33-35, and by Mr

14:27-30.

Luke 22:35

Ver. 35-38. Those who interpret Lu 22:35,36, as a precept of our Saviour's imposing a duty upon his disciples, or a counsel concerning the providing arms which they might use for the protection and defence of themselves, will not only find a difficulty to reconcile their notion of it to several other precepts, and the will of God declared by the apostles' practice, who never went about by force and arms to defend themselves in the first plantation and propagation of the gospel; but also to reconcile it to the last words of our Saviour, who said, when his disciples told him they had *two swords*, *It is enough*; which he would never have said, if he had intended any such thing; for two swords was much too little to have conquered that multitude of adversaries which the disciples of Christ were to meet with. Our Saviour doth doubtless speak in a figure, and all that he intends amounts but to this: Hitherto I have been with you, and you have had my special protection; though you went out without a purse or a scrip, yet you have wanted nothing; though you went without a sword, yet none did you any harm. But the time is now come, when the posture of your affairs will be much altered; your friends will be few, your enemies many, therefore you stand concerned to make as good preparation as you can do in those things that are consistent with the general precepts that I have given you. The tragedy will begin with me; for what is written of me must now be accomplished, Isa 53:12, *He was numbered with the transgressors*. I must be brought before magistrates as a common malefactor, and hanged on a cross between two thieves. And *the things concerning me shall shortly have an end*: you will next come upon the stage, and therefore prepare what in you lieth for the performance of your part.

Luke 22:39

Ver. 39. Both Matthew and Mark say, he went to *a place called*

Gethsemane; but that makes no difference, for whether Gethsemane signifieth a village, or a garden, or a valley, all agree it was at the foot of the mount of Olives. It was a place to which our Saviour had used to go ever since he came to Jerusalem, and lay in his way to Bethany. He went thither to pray, and his disciples followed him.

Luke 22:40

Ver. 40. When he came to the mount of Olives, he first setteth his disciples to that work, which at this day was proper for them.

Pray that ye enter not into temptation; that, if it be the will of God, you may be delivered from such an hour of trial as I am entering into; or, at least, that you may not be overcome by it. That my trials which you will presently be witnesses unto, and your own which you shall hereafter meet with, may have no power upon you to withdraw you from your work in the publication or profession of my gospel. The other two evangelists make mention of our Saviour's taking Peter, and James, and John with him, yet more privately. Luke mentions not that, but goeth on.

Luke 22:41

Ver. 41. Whether from the eight, or from Peter, James, and John also, the evangelist doth not tell us; but some are of opinion, that he took the three disciples along to join with him in prayer, from whom some account might be given of the substance of his prayer, which followeth. I rather think he was alone.

Luke 22:42

Ver. 42. We have a larger account given us of our Saviour's prayer, See Poole on "Mt 26:39", and following verses to Mt 26:46. See Poole on "Mr 14:35", and following verses to Mr 14:42.

Luke 22:43

Ver. 43,44. We have formerly opened these verses in Mt 26:44-46, where we took them in, as being a part of the history of our Saviour's praying before his passion.

Luke 22:45

Ver. 45,46. The relations which Matthew and Mark give us are both more particular than that given us by Luke, to which we refer the reader. Luke speaketh but of his praying once; Matthew saith he prayed thrice. Luke mentions nothing of his withdrawing with Peter, James, and John from the other eight; Matthew and Mark both mention it. Luke maketh mention of an angel's appearing to him, of the agony in which he was, and his sweating drops as it were of blood; which neither Matthew nor Mark take notice of: yet we must not think, that either any one of the evangelists, or all of them together, give a perfect account of all the words our Saviour used in these prayers, only they tell us the sum of them in different words; but See Poole on "Mt 26:40", and following verses to Mt 26:41. See Poole on "Mr 14:37", and following verses to Mr 14:38, where we have fully considered whatsoever is said by any of the evangelists upon this argument.

Luke 22:47

Ver. 47,48. See Poole on "Mt 26:47", and following verses to Mt 26:49. See Poole on "Mr 14:43", and following verses to Mr 14:45.

Luke 22:49

Ver. 49-51. No other evangelist but John hath this passage perfect. What he hath we have opened in our notes on Mt 26:51,52, because it tendeth to complete that part of the history there discoursed, concerning Christ's

being apprehended. John relates it with more circumstances, telling us that it was Peter who drew the sword, and that his name whose ear was cut off was Malchus, and relates some further words used by our Saviour to Peter, which we shall further consider in their places. This rash act of Peter might have cost him dear, for it made a kinsman of Malchus take such notice of him, as he was very near being accused by him, Joh 18:26. Swords are dangerous things for us to use, until God puts them into our hands. Peter ought not only to have asked his Master if he should smite with the sword, but also to have staid his hand till Christ had given him an answer.

Luke 22:52

Ver. 52,53. See Poole on "Mt 26:55". See Poole on "Mr 14:48". See Poole on "Mr 14:49". It speaketh a great degree of rage and malice against our Saviour, that so great men, as the chief of the priests and the elders, should come out at midnight, in the company of the officers and soldiers, to apprehend Christ. From these verses it appeareth that some of them were there in the height of their zeal.

Luke 22:54

Ver. 54-62. The whole history of Peter's denial of his Master, and of his repentance. See Poole on "Mt 26:69", and following verses to Mt 26:75, where we have opened what passages relating to it are in Mark or this evangelist.

Luke 22:63

Ver. 63-65. Concerning these abuses offered to our Saviour. See Poole on "Mt 26:67". See Poole on "Mt 26:68". See Poole on "Mr 14:65".

Luke 22:66

Ver. 66-71. Our blessed Lord before his death passed two trials or examinations. The one before the Jewish sanhedrim, whose proper province it was to try such as were accused as false prophets, or blasphemers. This was a kind of ecclesiastical court. The high priest was the chief judge in it, and we are told that they used to sit in his palace. The other was before Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea at that time; he principally took cognizance of criminal things, such especially as concerned the peace of the country, considered as a part of the Roman empire. These verses give an account only of the former. Blasphemy was the crime they charged upon him. We cannot from any one evangelist have a full account of either of them. See Poole on "Mt 26:57" and following verses to Mt 26:68, when have fully considered what all the evangelists say.

Luke 23:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 23:1-7 Jesus is accused before Pilate, who sendeth him to Herod.

Lu 23:8-11 Herod, disappointed in his expectations, mocketh him, and sendeth him back.

Lu 23:12 Herod and Pilate are made friends.
Lu 23:13-25 Pilate, willing to release Jesus, is prevailed on by the clamours of the people to release Barabbas, and give Jesus to be crucified.
Lu 23:26-31 Being led to the place of execution, Jesus biddeth the women who lamented him to weep rather for themselves and their children.
Lu 23:32,33 He is crucified between two malefactors,
Lu 23:34 prayeth for his enemies,
Lu 23:35-38 is scoffed at,
Lu 23:39-43 reviled by one of the malefactors, but confessed by the other, to whom he promises a place in paradise.
Lu 23:44,45 The unusual darkness, and rending the veil of the temple,
Lu 23:46 Christ crieth unto God, and expires.
Lu 23:47-49 The centurion's confession of him.
Lu 23:50-54 Joseph of Arimathea begs his body and buries it.
Lu 23:55-56 The women prepare spices, against the end of the sabbath.

Ver. 1-25. The history of our Saviour's examination and trial before Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, is recorded by all four evangelists, nor can it be distinctly and perfectly understood without the comparing together of what they all say, where our reader will find all such passages opened as occur in any of the evangelists about it, and stand in need of explication. The high priests, and the chief priests, and the elders had before determined our Saviour guilty of death, for blasphemy. They stoned Stephen in that case, Ac 7:59, without carrying him before the Roman governor at all, that we read of in that history; how came it to pass that they did not so by our Saviour, but make a double work of it?

1. Some think that that was rather done in a tumult, though he was carried before the council, Ac 6:12, than in a regular judicial way; for conquerors in those times, though they sometimes allowed the conquered nations courts of judicature, wherein they judged in ordinary matters according to their own laws, and had, judges of their own nations, yet ordinarily reserved capital causes to the cognizance of governors constituted by them; and this seemeth confirmed by Joh 18:31, where when Pilate said, *Take ye him, and judge him according to*

your law, we read that the Jews replied, *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.*

2. Others think that they had a power to put to death, but it was not lawful for them to put any to death upon the feast day: it was now the first day of unleavened bread. But the former seemeth more probable.
3. Or was it because they had sedition and treason to lay to his charge, which were crimes cognoscible only before the Roman governor? And possibly they were willing enough (knowing the reputation our Saviour had with the people) to lay the odium of his death upon Pilate, rather than take it upon themselves.
4. Whatever were the causes, it is most certain that it could be no otherwise, that all righteousness might be fulfilled.

Not a word of what our Saviour said could pass away. He had foretold, Mt 20:18,19 Mr 10:33,34 Lu 18:32,33, that he should not only be *betrayed to the chief priests and scribes*, and by them be *condemned to death*, but that he should be *delivered to the Gentiles, to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him*; and indeed that way of putting to death by crucifying could only be done by the Gentiles, and that death he was to die. In the history of our Saviour's examination before Pilate is observable ...

1. How much more justice and equity our Saviour found from a heathen, than from the Jewish churchmen: the latter condemn him without any proof, after all attempts of subornation, and seek to destroy him right or wrong; Pilate useth all endeavours to deliver him and set him at liberty.
2. How desperate the hatred is that groweth upon the account of religion in the hearts of wicked men; they prefer a person guilty of the highest immoralities and debaucheries, viz. sedition and murder, before the most innocent person that ever lived, who differed only from them in some points of religion, and those chiefly relating to traditions and ceremonies; but indeed he interpreted the will of God more strictly than their lusts would suffer them to interpret it, and lived another kind of life than they lived. Strictness and holiness of doctrine and life is that which enrages the men of the world against the preachers and professors of the gospel.

See Poole on "Mt 27:1", and following verses to Mt 27:66, more fully.

Luke 23:26

Ver. 26. See Poole on "Mt 27:32", See Poole on "Mr 15:21".

Luke 23:27

Ver. 27-31. What is in these verses is only found in this evangelist; but being part of what happened in the way, while our Saviour was leading to his cross, we have before opened what is here in Mt 27:32-34. They are another prophecy of the dreadful calamities which happened about forty

years after this, at the destruction of Jerusalem.

Luke 23:32

Ver. 32,33. Mark saith here, *The scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.* We met with this before, both in Matthew and Mark. See Poole on "Mt 27:33", See Poole on "Mt 27:38". See Poole on "Mr 15:27", See Poole on "Mr 15:28".

Luke 23:34

Ver. 34-46. See Poole on "Mt 27:35", and following verses to Mt 27:50. See Poole on "Mr 14:24", and following verses to Mr 14:37. This part also of the history of our Saviour's passion is best understood by a comparing together what all the evangelists say, which we have before done in our notes on Matthew, so as we shall only observe some few things from it as here recited.

And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, Lu 23:35. Matthew saith, Mt 27:41, the chief priests, scribes, and elders were there mocking. So saith Mark, Mr 15:31. How doth malice and hatred for religion's sake, not only out show men's reason, but also all their moral virtue! And make nothing accounted uncharitable, unjust, or indecent to them, into whom this devil hath once entered. To say nothing of the injustice and indecencies obvious to every eye, which these men showed upon our Saviour's examination and trial: it was now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the day following the passover night; or, as some think, the preparation both for the weekly sabbath and for the passover, though the most judicious interpreters be of the first opinion: one of them it was, be it which it would. If atheism and irreligion had not been at the height amongst this people, had it been possible that the high priest, and the chief of the priests, and the rulers of the Jews, should have spent

this day, the whole time, from break of the day till noon, in accusing or condemning Christ; and then have spent the afternoon in mocking and deriding him on the cross as he was dying, breaking all laws of humanity and decency, as well as religion? Admitting Annas and Caiaphas were not there, yet some of the chief of the priests, the scribes, and the elders were certainly there; and betraying themselves there more rudely and indecently than the common people.

The people were there *beholding* him. These were there *mocking* and *deriding* a dying person. But as we say in philosophy, *corruptio optimi est pessima*; so we shall find it true, that men who are employed in sacred things, if the true fear of God be not in them, to make them the best, they are certainly the vilest and worst of men. We read of no rudenesses offered to our Saviour dying, but from the scribes, chief priests, rulers, and soldiers. These verses also afford us great proof of the immortality of the soul; otherwise the penitent thief could not that day have been with Christ in paradise, as Christ promised, Lu 23:43. Nor would Christ have committed his soul into his Father's hand, if it had been to have expired with the body, and have vanished into air. For other things which concern this part of the history of our Saviour's passion, See Poole on "Mt 27:35", and following verses to Mt 27:50.

Luke 23:47

Ver. 47-49. For a perfect knowledge of all those things which did happen after our Saviour's nailing to the cross, till he died, and was taken down to

be buried, all the evangelists must be consulted. We have made a collection of them in our notes on Mt 27:51-56, to which the reader is here referred. See Poole on "Mt 27:51", and following verses to Mt 27:56. This passage about the centurion is taken notice of both by Matthew and Mark; only they say he said, *Truly this was the Son of God*. Luke saith that he said, *Certainly this was a righteous man*. Possibly the sense is the same, and the centurion by *the Son of God* did not mean the Son of God by eternal generation, but one highly favoured of God, a righteous man, and very dear to God, and highly beloved of him; for it must be by a very extraordinary revelation and impression if he, had so early a faith in Christ as God blessed for ever. I think Mr. Calvin, on Mt 26:54, expounds it well, *Non vulgarem esse hominem, sed divinitus excitatum statuit*. The centurion determined that Christ was no ordinary person, but one stirred up by and sent of God. It is observable, that Christ had a testimony from all orders of men almost, except the scribes, and priests, and Pharisees. Pontius Pilate and Herod declared him innocent. Pilate's wife acknowledgeth him a righteous person. The thief on the cross testifieth he had *done nothing amiss*. Judas the traitor confesseth he had *betrayed innocent blood*. The centurion owneth him to be no ordinary man, but *a righteous man, the Son of God*. The multitude always owned him: they see they are now run down; they smite their breasts, say nothing, but depart. Only those that were to have been the teachers of others are blinded and hardened to their ruin.

Luke 23:50

Ver. 50-53. See Poole on "Mt 27:57", and following verses to Mt 27:60.

Luke 23:54

Ver. 54. Greek, *σάββατον ἐπέφωσκε*, the sabbath shined. What preparation was here intended, whether to the weekly sabbath of the Jews,

(that it was most certainly), or to the passover also, which some will have to have been this year put off to that day, because of the concurrence of the weekly and the annual feast, I shall not determine, though the most judicious interpreters skilled in the Hebrew writings, think the passover this year was kept in its season, the night before.

And the sabbath, that is, the seventh day, *drew on*. The Greek word signifies shined, the propriety of which term hath cost critics some pains to make out, for it rather began to be dark than lightsome, their sabbath beginning after the setting of the sun. Some think the word referred to the evening star, which began to shine. Others, that it referred to a lamp or candle, which they were wont to set up, they call it *luminare discriminationis*, the light of discrimination, which being set up in their several families, the sabbath was accounted to be begun. Others think it referred to the following day. But there need not much labour in the case, for by the same reason that it is said, the evening and the morning made the sabbath day, the sabbath might be said ἐπιφωσκειν (that is, to begin) when it began to be dark, not taking the word in a proper, but in a metaphorical sense.

Luke 23:55

Ver. 55,56. See Poole on "Mt 27:61". It is Beza's observation upon these verses, that Christ, being opposed by the devil and all his instruments, being now dead, leaveth two or three poor women, as it were, in the front of the battle, intending within a very short time, without much ado, to triumph over all these terrible adversaries.

Luke 24:1

Chapter Summary

Lu 24:1-11 Christ's resurrection is declared by two angels to the women that came to the sepulchre, who report it to others, but are not believed.

Lu 24:12 Peter visiteth the sepulchre.

Lu 24:13-35 Christ appeareth to two disciples going to

Emmaus,

Lu 24:36-48 and to the apostles, eating before them, and explaining the Scriptures concerning himself.

Lu 24:49 He promises them the Holy Ghost,

Lu 24:50-53 and ascendeth into heaven.

Ver. 1. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were the two women that took up their seat right over against the sepulchre, to see where Christ was laid, Mt 27:61 Mr 15:47. They had bought spices some time of that day after they knew he must die, or else they bought them immediately after his burial, as they went home, for they rested on the sabbath day. They had now got some others into their society, and came very early upon the first day of the week, (See Poole on "Mt 28:1", as to the particular time), intending to show their last act of love to their friend by embalming his body.

Luke 24:2

Ver. 2. The stone which Joseph had rolled to the mouth of the sepulchre, when he had laid in the body, Mt 27:60, and the Jews had sealed, Mt 27:66, and which, as they came walking, they were so troubled about, how they should get it removed, Mr 16:3. How it came to be rolled away Matthew telleth us, Mt 28:2.

Luke 24:3

Ver. 3. Probably when they entered in they saw no angels, for one may reasonably suppose, that if they had they would hardly have adventured to enter in; but at their coming out, being satisfied that the body was not there, the angels made themselves visible to them; for it followeth, (see Lu 24:4-8).

Luke 24:4

Ver. 4-8. These two men were two angels in human shape. See Poole on "Mt 28:5" and following verses to Mt 28:7.

Luke 24:9

Ver. 9-12. See Poole on "Mt 28:8", and following verses to Mt 28:10, but more fully, See Poole on "Joh 20:2", and following verses to Joh 20:9, who repeateth this piece of history more largely than the rest. It is plain that scarce any of the disciples gave credit to the first relation of the women; but yet, it being near the city, Peter and John thought it worth the while to go and see. For though Peter alone be mentioned here, yet John is mentioned, Joh 20:3-5, under the notion of *that other disciple*; and he is said to have *outrun Peter*, and to have come first to the sepulchre. But concerning that part of the history relating to the resurrection, we shall reserve ourselves till we come to Joh 20:1-31. We now pass on to a piece of history relating to the evidencing of Christ's resurrection, which is neither touched by Matthew nor by Luke. Mark toucheth it shortly, Mr 16:12,13, *After that he appeared in another form to two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue; neither believed they them.* We shall now hear Luke giving us a more full and perfect account.

Luke 24:13

Ver. 13. Who those two were is variously guessed; that the name of the one was *Cleopas*, appeareth from Lu 24:18. Some will have the other to have been Luke, but he in the beginning of his Gospel distinguishes himself from eyewitnesses, Lu 1:2. Some will have it to have been Nathanael; others will have it to have been Simon, from Lu 24:34, and 1Co 15:5. But these things are so uncertain, that all the instruction we can learn from them is the vanity and uncertainty of traditions. This Emmaus was from Jerusalem about sixty furlongs, which make seven miles and a

half, according to our computation.

Luke 24:14

Ver. 14. There is nothing more ordinary, than for persons walking and riding upon roads to make the present news of the time. The subject of their discourse. There had great things happened in Jerusalem, the death of our Saviour was such; and those things which attended his death were very extraordinary; and it is not at all to be wondered that a discourse of them should fill every mouth, especially every disciple's mouth.

Luke 24:15

Ver. 15. He overtook them upon the way, and joined himself to their company. It is a good thing to be discoursing of Christ, it is the way to have his presence and company with us.

Luke 24:16

Ver. 16. God by his providence restrained their eyes, that though they saw a man, yet they could not discern who he was. We may learn from hence that the form or figure of Christ's body after his resurrection was not changed. His body had the same dimensions, the same quantity, colour, and figure, and was in itself a proper object for human eyes; for otherwise there had been no need for their eyes to be held. From hence also we may learn the influence which God hath upon all our members and senses, and how much we depend upon God for a daily power to exercise our natural faculties. Our Lord had no mind that these two disciples should at first discern who he was, that he might draw out their following discourses, and from them take occasion to prove from Scripture the certainty of his resurrection. From this text we may gather, how hard the Lutherans are put to it to maintain the real presence of the body of Christ, wherever the sacrament of the Lord's supper is administered; for this they must maintain, that although the body of Christ after his resurrection was the same that was crucified, and so obvious to sense, yet he had not only a power to make it insensible and invisible, which we grant, but that he hath

also a power to multiply it, and make it in one and the same instant to be in so many places as his supper is administered in; and also that he willeth it at the same time to be imperceptible by any human senses in all those places: for it is apparent from hence, that it was not at all times imperceptible; it might at this time have been seen, had not the disciples eyes been held, that they could not know him.

Luke 24:17

Ver. 17. Not that he, from whom the secrets of no hearts are hidden, did not know what they were discoursing about, but that he had a mind to hear them repeated from them, that from their repetition of them he might take the better advantage to instruct them.

Luke 24:18

Ver. 18,19. The things which had lately happened in Jerusalem were so many, and so unusual, that the disciples wonder that any one coming from Jerusalem should ask, *What things?* They therefore ask him if he were a mere stranger in Jerusalem, coming from some other country, or from some remoter parts of Judea or Galilee? Or, if he were the only man who had been unconcerned in what was the common discourse both of the town and country? Still our Saviour draws out the discourse from them, by asking them, *What things?* They tell him, *Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a Prophet mighty in deed and word;* in which phrase Stephen celebrated Moses, Ac 7:22; that is, one who did not only in an extraordinary manner reveal the will of God unto men, but also did many great and mighty works, and lived a most holy and most exemplary life and conversation, so as that he was not only highly favoured of God, but in great repute and estimation also amongst the people.

Luke 24:20

Ver. 20,21. It is from hence evident, that as yet they neither had a true notion of Christ as God man in one person, nor yet of the Messiah, but still

remained in an opinion of a temporal deliverance to be effected for the Jews by the Messiah, when he should come. The words also showed a great weakness in the disciples' faith as to Christ; they speak as if they were quite out of breath, and their faith began to fail. We were, say they, once of the mind, and maintained some hope, that this Jesus of Nazareth had been he whom God had designed for the Messiah, and now it is *the third day since these things were done*. This mention of *the third day* is a good argument to prove that these were some old disciples of Christ, who had taken notice of his promise, or prophecy, that he should rise again the third day, Lu 18:33. They ought to have had patience till night, and to have considered, that though the third day were begun, yet it was not yet past.

Luke 24:22

Ver 22-24. It is plain from the relation of these two disciples, that they had whatsoever might conduce to a moral persuasion. They had the revelation of the word, from the mouth of Christ himself. They had evidences from the women, from the apparition of angels, from some among themselves, that his body was not there. The angels said he was risen. Why do they hesitate then? Why do they not believe? Is the fault in the perverseness of their wills? Had they no mind to believe, that the thing they had hoped, longed, waited for, was true? Certainly there was nothing they more desired. Let the patrons of the power of man's will to believe, or perform any actions spiritually good, tell us (if they can) what could hinder these disciples actual believing the resurrection of Christ, but the impotency of their wills, God not yet pleasing to influence and assist their wills actually to believe what they had the greatest propensions and inclinations imaginable to have believed.

Luke 24:25

Ver. 25-27. By our Saviour's form of reprehending his disciples, we may both learn:

1. That it is not every saying, *Thou fool*, but a saying of it from a root of hatred, malice, and anger, which our Saviour makes to be a breach of the sixth commandment, Mt 5:21,22. Our Saviour's reprehension of them was out of a principle of love, and a root of good will to them.
2. That the best of us are very *slow of heart to believe* what cometh to us upon the mere credit of a Divine revelation. It is also observable from what we have, Lu 24:27, that Moses and the prophets are not to be rejected by Christians; they also have much concerning Christ; out of them Christ instructs these two disciples in the things concerning himself.

Luke 24:28

Ver. 28,29. I do not understand how some conclude from hence the lawfulness of dissembling, or telling a lie, in some cases, because the evangelist saith our Saviour *made as though he would have gone further*, and did not; for without doubt our Saviour had gone further if the disciples had not been urgent with him to have staid: nor did he stay long there, as we shall hear by and by.

Luke 24:30

Ver. 30,31. Some would have this bread to be sacramental bread, as if our Lord at this time celebrated his supper; and some of the papists are mightily zealous for that interpretation, thinking that they have in it a mighty argument to justify their lame administration of it in one kind (for here is no mention of the cup at all); but they do not consider, that this text will prove (if it be taken with relation to the supper) more than they would have it; as,

1. That priests may consecrate without wine, which themselves will not grant, though they say that, both elements being consecrated, the people sufficiently partake if they share but in one.

2. It will also prove that a priest may consecrate without using those substantial words, *This is my body*. But it is a most improbable thing, that our Saviour coming just out of his journey should fall upon his administration of this ordinance.

The text is certainly to be meant of bodily bread, which our Saviour never took without a previous blessing of it, Mt 14:19. How their eyes were opened the evangelist tells us. Some think they knew him by his form of blessing. It is a wonder then they did not know him before by his style in three or four hours discourse by the way. Others think they knew him by taking upon him the office of the master of the feast, to bless the table, and to carve to the guests. But all this is vain. He withdrew the veil from their eyes, which alone hindered their discerning him before, for the object was visible, only the medium of their sight was indisposed.

And he vanished out of their sight. Our Saviour had now obtained his end, viz. to satisfy them that he was indeed risen; now he disappears, for that he had a power to make his body imperceptible to the disciples' senses is out of doubt.

Luke 24:32

Ver. 32. There was a mighty difference, no doubt, between Christ's preaching and his ministers': he preached as one who had authority, not as the scribes, not as ordinary ministers, but with more majesty and power; but as to the saving efficacy of his words, that depended upon his will; where he pleased to put forth such efficacious grace, there his words became effectual; where he did not, they were not so: Christ preached in the hearing of hundreds, who yet continued unbelievers, and perished in their unbelief. There is a great deal of difference also between one minister's preaching and another's; some kind of preaching of itself makes men's hearts to freeze, others make them to burn; but where preaching makes our heart to burn within us, Christ throws in the coal, which the best preacher doth but blow up: only the Spirit of God is pleased to work (as Erasmus saith) *secundum quod nactus est organon*, according to the instrument it worketh by, and to concur with rational and spiritual means

in order to rational and spiritual ends. But wherever any soul is baptized with fire at hearing a sermon, it is also baptized with the Holy Ghost. Christ will not always cure blind eyes with clay and spittle, though he did it once. These were disciples before the fire was kindled in their hearts; Christ's preaching did but blow it up. We ought so to speak in our preaching, so to open and apply the Scriptures, as our discourses may have a rational tendency to make the hearts of our hearers to burn within them, not so as to make them dead, and sleepy, and cold, or lukewarm; and then to know that it must be Christ's work to inflame them, when we have said all that we can say.

Luke 24:33

Ver. 33-35. Lu 24:34, compared with 1Co 15:5, makes some great authors think, that Simon was one of the two, and that Cleopas (who was the other) spake this. They make no stay at Emmaus, but come presently to Jerusalem, and acquaint the disciples, that for certain Christ was risen, and that he had appeared to them in the way, and was known of them at their breaking of bread.

Luke 24:36

Ver. 36. Of this appearance of Christ Mark speaks, Mr 16:14, and Joh 20:19,20. The salutation which he useth to them was common amongst the Jews, and answereth our God save you, or God be with you. It was an appreciation of all blessing and happiness, which they comprehended under the name of piece.

Luke 24:37

Ver. 37. Spirits sometimes (by God's permission or direction) assumed human shapes. They seeing a human shape, and not able on the sudden to conceive how a human body should come into the midst among them, without any more noise or notice taken of it, were affrighted, as we usually

are at the sight of apprehended apparitions. From hence we may conclude, that either the world, and the best men in it, have been in all ages deceived, and a few atheists have been wiser than them all, or there are such beings as spirits.

Luke 24:38

Ver. 38-40. If either the papists or the Lutherans could show us Christ's hands or feet, while they impose upon us to believe that Christ's body is really present at or in the Lord's supper, they would not so fright us, nor make so many thoughts arise in us, as they do, about their apprehensions of the nature of a body. But while the papists allow us to handle and to taste the bread, and we find no such things, and the Lutherans suffer our eyes to be open, and we can see no such things, we cannot but conclude, that the body of Christ which they talk of must certainly be a spirit, which (according to our Saviour's notion) is a substance which hath neither flesh nor bones, as we see the body they would have us to believe hath not; that is to say, that the body they talk of is no body. Our Saviour here proveth that it was his true body, which appeared to them, because,

1. It had integral parts, hands and feet.
2. Because it might be seen.
3. It might be handled.
4. It had flesh and bones, which a spirit hath not.

Then he shows them his hands and feet. So then our Saviour did not think that the judgment of our senses was to be rejected, concerning the nature of bodies, and his body in particular, and that in its state of exaltation, when it was raised from the dead; Do any of them say that Christ's body here came through the door, or it could not have been here? How shall that be proved? We can easily tell them how his body might be in the midst of them, though it were not discerned while he was there; even as the eyes of the two disciples were held, Lu 24:16, that they could not discern Christ, so the eyes of the disciples might be held now, till he was in the midst amongst them.

Luke 24:41

Ver. 41-43. *Believed not for joy;* yet if they had not now believed, they doubtless would not have rejoiced, but their faith was the cause of their joy; yet the excess of their joy was the hinderance of their faith; so dangerous are the excessive motions of our affections. Christ here gives them another evidence of the truth of his body, he *did eat before them*, though very ordinary country diet, *a piece of broiled fish, and of a honey comb;* such a meal as we read of that he had at the lake of Tiberius, Joh 21:9. He did not eat to uphold, but only to testify, his life. Thus when he had raised the daughter of Jairus, Lu 8:55, he bid them give her something to eat; and for this end Lazarus sat at meat with the rest, Joh 12:2 and Peter proves the resurrection of Christ from their eating and drinking with him, Ac 10:41. Let not profane wits seek knots in bulrushes, inquiring what became of this meat? &c. Let them first tell us what became of the meat the angels did eat with Abraham, Ge 18:8, and learn to believe, that it was easy with the power of God to annihilate again that meat, which was not necessary for the sustentation of the body of Christ, now freed from all the cravings of natural appetite, though he did eat it to satisfy them that he was truly risen from the dead.

Luke 24:44

Ver. 44. The Jews ordinarily divided the Old Testament into the law, the prophets, and the holy writings, which they called the *Hagiographa*. The Book of Psalms was one of the last sort, and one of the most noted amongst them. So as by these three terms our Saviour understands all the Scriptures of the Old Testament. He tells them, that he had before his death, while he conversed with them, told them that *all things* (which were very many) which were found in any of these books concerning him must be fulfilled: he had told them so, Lu 18:31 Mt 16:21 17:22 20:18 Mr 9:31 10:34.

Luke 24:45

Ver. 45. He did not open their understanding without the Scriptures, he sends them thither; and he knew the Scriptures would not sufficiently give them a knowledge of him, and the things of God, without the influence and illumination of his Spirit: they are truly taught of God, who are taught by his Spirit to understand the Scriptures. Christ gives a great honour to the Scriptures. The devil cheats those souls whom he persuades to cast away the Scriptures in expectation of a teaching by the Spirit. The Spirit teacheth by, not without, not contrary to, the Holy Scriptures.

Luke 24:46

Ver. 46. All the Divine predictions are certain and infallible. The Jews did maliciously and freely prosecute our Saviour to death, and God did certainly foresee how their wills would be determined, and the event was accomplished accordingly.

Luke 24:47

Ver. 47,48. The few words in Lu 24:47 are comprehensive of the great duty of the apostles:

1. To preach *repentance and remission of sins*.
2. In Christ's *name*.
3. To *all nations*.
4. *Beginning at Jerusalem*.

They were to preach repentance, that is, a turning from sinful courses into a course of life consonant to the will of God; and remission of sins, that is, upon repentance; this they were to preach in his name, which may refer either to their preaching; then our Saviour lets them know that they were to be his ministers, and to preach by his authority, to be *ambassadors for Christ*, 2Co 5:20, stewards of his mysteries. Or else it may refer to repentance and remission of sins, which are to be preached in his name, for

the sake of merits and satisfaction. They were to preach this among all nations. This was prophesied of plentifully, Ps 2:8 Isa 49:6 Da 7:14 Ho 2:23 Joe 2:32. This was a piece of Divine revelation which Christ had till this time concealed in a great measure; when he sent out the twelve, Mt 5:5, he commanded them not to go to the Gentiles. Beginning at Jerusalem, that is, amongst the Jews. He was prophesied of under the notion of a King, to be set upon the Lord's holy hill of Zion, Ps 2:6. So Ps 110:2 Isa 2:3 28:16 45:1. In pursuance of this, we shall find the apostles preaching only in Judea, till they had judged themselves *unworthy of everlasting life*, then they, *turned to the Gentiles*, Ac 13:38,46.

Luke 24:49

Ver. 49. It is questioned by none, but by *the promise of the Father* our Lord meaneth the promise of the Spirit, as it came down in the days of Pentecost. This effusion of the Spirit was promised under the Old Testament, Isa 44:3 Jer 31:33 Eze 36:27; most eminently, Joe 2:28, the apostle himself interpreting this prophecy, Ac 2:16-18. See also Ac 1:8, where the fulfilling of this *promise of the Father*, as it is called Ac 1:4, is put before—and *ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in Judea and in Samaria*; and is also expounded by, *But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you*. Our Lord also had said, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever*. Joh 14:16. In this text he saith, that he will send him; so also Joh 15:26 Joh 16:7; thereby confirming his disciples in this, that he was equal with the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was sent by the Father and him, yet sent by the Father upon the prayer of the Son, and in his name, Joh 14:16,26. This Holy Spirit is also called, *power from on high*; *the power of the Highest*, Lu 1:35. But here the gifts of the Holy Ghost may be understood, as also in Ac 1:8, where it is said this power should be received after that the Holy Ghost should come upon them: until this time should come, which was in the days of Pentecost, Ac 2:1, the disciples were bound to stay at Jerusalem, which accordingly they did. And we may from hence conclude, that these words of our Saviour were spoken to his disciples after his appearance to them in Galilee, (of which Luke saith nothing), which was the place where (as most think) *he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once*, 1Co 15:6.

Luke 24:50

Ver. 50,51. This must be understood to have happened forty days after our Saviour's resurrection, for so Luke himself tells us, Ac 1:3.

And he led them out as far as Bethany; not the village Bethany, but that part of the mount of Olives which belonged to Bethany. Our Saviour had been often there praying; from thence he now ascendeth into heaven.

And he lifted up his hands and blessed them: some think that by blessing here is meant praying, and the lifting up of his hands was accommodated to that religious action. Others think that blessing here signifieth a more authoritative act; and that his lifting up of his hands was a stretching out of his hands, as a sign of that effectual blessing of them.

While he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven; that is, he moved upward as if he had been carried, for it is certain that our Saviour ascended by his own power. Luke saith, Ac 1:9, *He was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.* As Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind, 2Ki 2:11, so Christ went up in a cloud; but with this difference, Christ ascended by his own power, Elijah could not without the help of an angel.

Luke 24:52

Ver. 52,53. We never before read of any act of adoration which the disciples performed to Christ. Their faith was now come to the highest pitch. They did no longer look upon him only as one sent of God, a great Prophet, nor only as the Son of David, the promised Messiah; in the mean time not rightly taking the notion of the Messiah, but looking upon him as one who should be a temporal saviour, and deliverer of his people; they now believe him to be the eternal Son of God, being so manifested by his resurrection from the dead, and ascension into heaven before their eyes. According to his commandment, they return to Jerusalem, full of joy: *and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.* It is said,

Ac 1:13,14, that being returned *they went into an upper room, and continued in prayer and supplication*. Some think that this upper room was appendant to the temple. But *continually* here may reasonably be interpreted often, or ordinarily, or at temple hours of prayer; as the morning and evening sacrifice are called the *continual burnt offering*, Ex 29:42 Nu 28:3. Their work was to praise and bless God. It is not said for what, but easily understood: as for other mercies, so more especially for his sending the Messiah for our redemption, and the confirmation and perfecting their faith in him.