**Notes for Book of Luke**

Theme: God’s salvation, as predicted by the prophets has arrived in the coming of the Messiah—Jesus of Nazareth. He is the savior of the world and this salvation is now spreading throughout the world (including that of the Gentiles, of course).

Universal appeal of the gospel (role of Gentiles in Jesus’ ministry)

Jesus’ concern for outsiders, the poor, “sinners”, Samaritans

Reversal of fortune (poor become rich, rich become poor)

Emphasis on role of women in Jesus’ life and ministry

Luke 1:7 But they had no children. Elizabeth was barren.

Luke 1:18 Both old (past menopause) and barren A double whammy!

There is a pattern here: Righteous, upright people being nevertheless childless/barren

Sarah/Isaac

Rachel/Joseph (Gen 30:22-23) (note: v. 23 God has taken away my disgrace)

Hannah/Samuel

Now Elizabeth/John

Q: Can you relate to feeling “old, barren and useless”

Luke 1:19 God has good news for Zechariah, Elizabeth and us!

Luke 1:13 Your wife will bear a son.

John = God is gracious.

Here is the message for us:

The old will be more productive than the young

The barren will be fruitful

You may have been poor—a reject in the eyes of the world, but if you will be upright and observant, God will make you productive and fruitful.

Birth of Jesus.

Here we see emphasized Luke’s theme of turning the world upside down and salvation for the Gentiles.

Facts about Mary:

1. She was very young.

2. She was female.

3. She was poor.

4. She was defenseless and vulnerable

What does God say to her? Luke 1:26-28. Talk about a turnaround!

1. You are highly favored. (Imagine that!!!)

2. God is with you. Talk about good news.

But think about it. What is the good news? You will be pregnant. You will be the object of scorn and great shame, and, almost certainly, your betrothed will put you away. Your life in Jewish society is OVER!

Mary’s amazing response:

Luke 1:38 I am the Lord’s Servant. May it be to me as you have said.

Luke 1:45 (Elizabeth to Mary) Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished. A great memory verse!

Why? Luke 1:38, 45

A great memory verse Luke 1:45 “Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished.”

Luke 1:51-53 (Mary’s song) He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;

He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts

He has brought down the rulers from their thrones

but has lifted up the humble

He has filled the hungry with good things

but has sent the rich away empty.

The theme of Luke announced: Jesus is savior

In Luke and Acts, “salvation” is not just about a future in heaven. In Luke, salvation is something we have today in the Kingdom of God.

Salvation: Preservation or deliverance from destruction, difficulty or evil.

Luke 3:1-6 (quoting Isaiah 40:3-5) What did JTB see? Things in this life will be made right. Paths will be made straight. People will see the right way to live.

Luke 7:36-50 Who did they think would be saved? The Pharisee. Who was actually saved? The sinful woman (or anyone who understands that they are very sinful)

Luke 18:18-30 Who were the apostles assuming would be saved? Who was saved? Acc. Jesus, who will be saved? Those who give up everything.

Luke 19:5-9 The lowest of the low… A chief tax collector is saved. Today salvation has come to this house. Wait a minute! He was not baptized. In what sense had salvation come to Zachaeus’ house? Jesus.

Acts 4:8-12 Salvation found in the name of Jesus Christ.

Acts 2:38-40 How do we save ourselves? From what? From the corruption **in this world.**

**Q: What has Jesus saved you from?**

To quote Joel Green:

Salvation embraces the totality of embodied life, including its social, economic and political concerns. For Luke, the God of Israel is the Great Benefactor whose redemptive purpose is manifest in the career of Jesus, whose message is that this benefaction enables and inspires new ways of living in the world.

**The birth of Jesus**

Jesus born to poverty, not royalty. Born in a manger. There was no room for him. (Luke 2:6-7)

Jesus’ birth announced first to lowly shepherds. His first converts were lowly people (Luke 2:17). His ministry is first announced by lowly shepherds.

He will be a sign spoken against (Luke 2:34). Jesus is counted among the outcast and oppressed.

He will be “a light to the Gentiles” (Luke 2:32).

His will be a ministry of salvation (Luke 2:30)

**IV Jesus’ Galilean Ministry** Luke 4:14-9:50

Luke 4:16 Jesus now 30+ so qualified to read in the Synagogue.

Now, imagine you know nothing of this particular sermon, but bearing in mind what you know about Jesus’ message, Q: What do you think would be the content of his first lesson to those who know him in his home town?

Why does Luke choose this particular sermon? Because if fits his theme. Jesus announces that he is the fulfillment of God’s promise—he is the Messiah and introduces his ministry of offering salvation. Luke 4:18-19 (not surprisingly quoting from Isaiah) “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

His message, His good news, his salvation: (quoting Isaiah 61:1-2)

1. Good news for the poor (in spirit?)

2. Freedom for (spiritual) prisoners Q: How has God freed you?

3. Healing for the (spiritually) sick. Q: How has God healed you?

4. Release the (spiritually) oppressed. Q: What oppression has God freed you from?

5. The favor of the Lord. Q: How has God shown you favor?

Q: Which is most important to you?

Why does Luke choose this particular sermon? Because if fits his theme. Jesus announces that he is the fulfillment of God’s promise—he is the Messiah and introduces his ministry of offering salvation—but not salvation in the form we would think.

Theme of Luke: God’s salvation, as predicted by the prophets has arrived in the coming of the Messiah—Jesus of Nazareth. He is the savior of the world and this salvation is now spreading throughout the world (including that of the Gentiles, of course).

How is he received? Not all that well. They try to throw him off a mountain. Why? Because, as is typical for Luke, Jesus declares that God loves the Gentiles too! (Luke 424-27) Elijah was sent to a widow in Zarephath, near Sidon and he healed, not a Jew, but Namaan the Syrian).

Brilliantly (under inspiration of course), Luke chooses a story which foreshadows Jesus’ entire ministry. His outreach to the downtrodden. His ultimate rejection and murder at the hands of his own people—the ones who, by rights ought to have received him as one of their own.

From here, Luke proceeds immediately to Jesus’ ministry to the poor and the downtrodden, fulfilling the prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-2. In Luke he does this before he chooses the first disciples (unlike in Mark).

He frees the prisoners/the demon-possessed (Luke 4:31-37)

Jesus heals the sick (Luke 4:38-40, 5:12-14, 17-26)

Jesus releases the oppressed (Luke 4:41)

All this is used to point to the breaking out of the Kingdom of God (Luke 4:43)

Luke 5:27-32 Jesus calls Levi (Matthew). Jesus calls sinners to follow him.

Again, Jesus turns everything upside down. Who is he hanging out with? The Pharisees? No! He is hanging out with tax collectors. (5:29 a crowd of tax collectors)

Luke 5:31 Good news for (those who admit that they are) sinners. The good news is for the sinners, not for the righteous!!

All this continues the theme that the high and mighty—the self-righteous—will being brought low and the low and despised—the outcasts and outsiders will be lifted up in the Kingdom of God.

An outsider—a Centurion—has more faith than anyone in Israel (Luke 7:1-10)

A poor widow’s son is raised from the dead, rather than the child of an important person (7:11-17)

A prostitute is praised for her humility and love, while the arrogant and wealthy in the house are rebuked by Jesus for not even showing common hospitality to the lowly Jesus (Luke 7:36-50) (other examples: Luke 18:9-14 Parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, Luke 15:11-32 the Prodigal Son, Luke 19:1-10 Zacchaeus, Luke 23:39-43 Repentant thief on the cross)

As Jesus said, to summarize Luke’s perspective, “Those who have been forgiven much love much and those who think they need little forgiveness love little (7:47)

Other examples of Jesus turning things upside down:

The rich fool Luke 12:13-21

Do not invite the rich to banquets, but invite the poor, the lame and the blind Luke 14:12-13

The Pharisees sin: They are lovers of money Luke 16:14

The Parable of the rich man and Lazarus Luke 16:19-31 This is about both physical and spiritual poverty.

Luke emphasized the goodness of Samaritans often as well:

James and John rebuked for calling fire down on a Samaritan village Luke 9:51-16

The Parable of the Good Samaritan Luke 10:29-37

The only leper who returns to thank Jesus is a Samaritan Luke 17:11-19

Luke also gives prominence and respect to women. He lists 13 women in Jesus’ life not mentioned in the other three gospels.

Elizabeth

Mary

Ana

Widow of Nain Luke 7:12-15

Woman who anoints Jesus’ feet Luke 7:36-50

Women who supported Jesus financially Luke 8:1-3

Woman healed of bleeding Luke 8:43-48

Mary and Martha Luke 10:38-42

Crippled woman “daughter” of Abraham healed on the Sabbath Luke 13:10-17

The poor widow Luke 21:1-4

Women are especially prominent surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus

Daughters of Jerusalem lament the death of Jesus Luke 23:27-31

Women were the chief witnesses and comforters of Jesus at the crucifixion Luke 23:49

Women were the first to witness the resurrection Luke 23:55-24:11

Luke 6:17-49 is Luke’s account of the “Sermon on the Mount.”

Luke 6:17-49 describes a radical new ethic—the ethic of the Kingdom of God.

The theme: In the Kingdom of God there will be a radical kind of love and righteousness which will greatly exceed that required by the Law of Moses.

Again, blessings to the poor, the hungry, those in mourning, and the persecuted, which is the opposite of what the world sees as great.

Here, Jesus uses those the world sees as lesser (poor, hungry, downtrodden and persecuted) to define a spiritual equivalent to these things which even the rich and successful can aspire.

6:20 We may not be poor, but we can be “poor in spirit.”

6:21 We may not be hungry, but we can “hunger for righteousness”

6:22 We may not have reason to mourn, but we can mourn over the sins in our’s and other’s lives.

6:23 We may not originate from a persecuted and outcast group, but we can be persecuted and outcast because of our love for God.

Unlike Matthew, Luke specifically lists the opposite. He is explicit about those the world things great and how they are not really so great. They will be at the bottom in the Kingdom of God, if they enter it at all.

6:24 the rich they already have their comfort!

6:25a the well fed They will go spiritually hungry

6:25b those who laugh They will mourn

6:26 those well thought of

6:27-36 Jesus spells out the upside-down kingdom ethic

Love your enemies v. 27

Praise those who curse you v. 28

Give to those who take from you v. 29-30

v. 35-36 In doing so, you are simply being like God who is also merciful.

Note: God loved us when

We were his enemies

We cursed him

We took from him without giving to him.

Luke 7 Jesus puts into practice what he just said. (by praising an outsider—a Roman Centurion (Luke 7:1-10), by raising the son of a very poor and outcast widow (Luke 7:11-17) and by praising a sinful woman (7:44-47) in the house of a very successful self-righteous man (Luke 7:36-50))

1. Parables about the poor, disadvantaged, despised and oppressed (and miracles to help them as well). Theme of reversal.

Luke 10:25-37 Parable of the Samaritan.

Luke 12:13-21 Parable of the rich fool.

Luke 13:10-17 Healing a crippled woman (on the Sabbath!)

Luke 14:7-14 Do not take the places of honor. V. 13 invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.

Luke 14:16-24 Parable of the Great Banquet (the poor the sinners and the Samaritans enter heaven in front of the Jews)

Luke 15:1-32 Parable of the Lost Coin, Lost Sheep and Lost(Prodigal) Son. Unlike the Pharisees, God seeks out the sinner to bring him back and to bless him.

Luke 16:19-31 Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. The ultimate parable in this genre.

Luke 17:11-19 Healing the lepers. Notice, it was the Samaritan who came back and thanked him!

Luke 18:1-8 The persistent widow.

Luke 18:9-14 The Pharisee and the Tax Collector.

Luke 18:15 Let the children come to me.

Luke 18:35-43 A blind beggar receives his sight.

Also, Luke 16:13-15 What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight (referring to the fact that the Pharisees loved money)

This entire section ends with what might be the ultimate example of reversal: The story of Zacchaeus the tax collector. Luke 19:1-10 Zaccahaeus is the ultimate outcast. Not only is he a tax collector, he is a chief tax collector!