



Type: Book Chapter

Luke Chapter 13

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Source: *The Testimony of Luke*

Published: Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2014

Page(s): 651–683

Abstract: A commentary on the events of Luke 13, accompanied by parallel columns of the King James translation of the chapter alongside a new rendition.



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Luke Chapter 13

INTRODUCTION

Pushing his agenda steadily forward while on the road—“he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem” (13:22)—the Savior continues to hold his tight teaching focus on judgment and the end of time, broadening and reinforcing statements that appear at the end of the prior chapter (see 12:35–56). Paired with these concepts runs the principle of repentance that moves ahead determinedly and tirelessly through the beginning of this chapter. To be specific, Jesus draws on reports of tragedies in Jerusalem to underscore the urgent need to repent (see 13:1–5). Then he turns to a story about an owner of a vineyard whose impatience with a nonbearing fig tree illustrates keenly that one cannot take forever to change one’s ways (see 13:6–9).

Jesus’ teachings about the kingdom of God frame another strong thrust (see 13:18). The story about the woman who suffers “a spirit of infirmity eighteen years” molds the kind of kingdom that Jesus envisions, including how to observe the Sabbath day (13:11–17). In addition, his short parables about the grain of mustard seed and the meal with leaven point to the quiet, steady, almost natural growth of the kingdom as well as underscoring the equality of men and women within it (see 13:18–21). Further, Jesus’ sayings about who does and does not belong within the kingdom carry this theme to the frightening conclusion that many who expect to enter the kingdom will not (see 13:23–30). Above all, Jesus’ declarations about Jerusalem point to the high moment in his ministry—his death and resurrection—which will establish the kingdom of God on the earth, complete with a government of Apostles and prophets. Jerusalem’s citizens will fail to enter the kingdom because they do not repent and come to him (see 13:31–35).

Much in this chapter is driven by unlooked-for events that touch either Jesus or those about him: Pilate’s execution at the Jerusalem temple of Galileans whose identity must be known to some in his entourage; the tragic

accident at the Siloam tower that takes the lives of eighteen people; the disfigured woman whom he meets in a synagogue; and the meeting with Pharisees who warn him about Herod Antipas's hateful intention to capture and kill him. Briefly stated, Jesus grasps an event, tragic or otherwise, and turns it into a moment for teaching, or for healing and restoring. And all these events share a common element—no one among his disciples has the power to reverse their impact, illustrating that bad things happen to good, innocent people, even in holy places such as the temple.

TRAGEDY AND REPENTANCE (13:1–5)

King James Translation

1 There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilæans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilæans were sinners above all the Galilæans, because they suffered such things? 3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. 4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

New Rendition

1 And at that time some were present who reported to him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate mixed with their sacrifices. 2 And answering he said to them, “Do you think that these Galileans were sinners in comparison to all other Galileans because they suffered these things? 3 No, I say to you, rather you will all likewise perish unless you repent. 4 Or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them—do you suppose they were sinful compared to all the other people living in Jerusalem? 5 No, I say to you, rather you will all likewise perish unless you repent.”

Notes

13:1 *There were present:* Here the Greek verb (*pareimi*) carries the sense of arriving rather than already being present, indicating that new arrivals bring the news.¹

some that told him: News of the executions now reaches Jesus and his followers, setting up his candid reaction. The Joseph Smith Translation

1. Plummer, *Luke*, 337–38; BAGD, 629.

changes this expression to “some who spake unto him,” implying that the news is old, and the tragedy arises in casual conversation (JST 13:1). Significantly, Jesus does not signal approval or condemnation but instead draws attention to an old question that rises prominently in the book of Job: What is the relationship between ill fortune and a person’s inner state—between sin and suffering? Said another way, why do bad things happen to good people?

the Galilæans: Who are these people and what is the incident? Presumably, some who lose their lives are known to others in the crowd, making the news all the harder to accept. Moreover, manifesting rebellious tendencies stands as a common charge against certain people from Galilee, perhaps moving Pilate against suspected insurrectionists.² Pilate’s act may underlie the “enmity” that stands between him and Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee (see 23:12). Although Josephus records a similar event, the two do not appear to be the same because he reports an insurrection among Samaritans that Pilate crushes far from the temple.³

blood . . . mingled with their sacrifices: The images that these terms raise to view are those contrasting death and worship at the temple. But Jesus steps away from worship and animal sacrifice involving the loss of blood and the death of the sacrificial victim, instead drawing the attention of hearers to the loss of *human* blood and to *human* death. In responding to the now jangled feelings of some in his audience, he underscores the ultimate losses that any of us may suffer, losses that dash hopes and interrupt lives. By doing so, he frames his following remarks in tones of the ultimate—whether in decisions or in actions.

Pilate: Already introduced at 3:1 (see the Note thereon), this man holds a reputation for a relentless approach to matters that offend those whom he governs, especially in his reputed determination to openly disrespect Jewish religious sentiments, which he certainly achieves by executing worshipers at the temple.⁴

2. Marshall, *Luke*, 553.

3. Josephus, *A.J.* 18.4.1 (§§85–87); Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1006–7.

4. Frederick Fyvie Bruce, *New Testament History* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1969), 34–38; Daniel R. Schwartz, “Pontius Pilate,” in *ABD*, 5:395–400; Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah. From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 1:698–705; Helen K. Bond, *Pontius Pilate in History and Interpretation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xi–xix, 203–7.

their sacrifices: This notation draws up the possibility of an important celebration that takes Galileans to the temple and invites the view that the persons executed are sacrificing their own animals, an act consistent with Passover when individuals kill their own lambs.⁵ But this may be an overly literal reading of Luke's words, for all other regular sacrifices are reckoned as belonging to the worshiper, not to the priests who perform the offerings. Besides, because Jesus is known to have attended Passover celebrations in Jerusalem, presumably to reach out to large audiences, it is difficult to see him now staying away (see 2:41–42; John 2:13; 5:1; 7:10; 11:55–12:1; see the Notes on 10:30, 38; 13:34; 19:47; 23:5, 28, 50; 24:13).⁶

13:2 *these Galilæans were sinners above all:* The issue has to do with suffering and sin: are they “sinners above all . . . because they suffered?” In this case, Jesus refuses to connect sin to suffering, much as he does in the cases of those who die at Siloam (see 13:4) and the man born blind (see John 9:1–3). But unlike the man born blind, whose healing does not draw out a warning from Jesus, in this instance Jesus sketches out lessons about repentance (see 13:3, 5).

13:3 *ye shall all likewise perish:* With only slight variation in the Greek text, this sentiment appears again in 13:5, making Jesus' point emphatic. But he is not touching on death in this world, as the Galileans have experienced (13:1). Rather, “perishing” points to the world to come. In this sense, Jesus speaks of ultimate, heavenly realities.

13:4 *the tower in Siloam:* This structure, and its collapse, are known from no other ancient source. Josephus' description of the walls and towers that surround Jerusalem in the age of Jesus does not include a note about this tower. Presumably, it stands as part of the wall that encloses the Siloam pool.⁷

Analysis

Tragic events that unexpectedly engulf innocent people allow the Savior to tackle an ever-important question, that of sin and suffering. The most notable attempt to deal with this issue lies in the book of Job, wherein the suffering Job maintains his innocence in the face of his friends' accusations that he must have done something to offend God, sufficiently that Job “shall not depart out of darkness; the flame shall dry up his branches” (Job 15:30). But both Job and Jesus turn against this view, even though it undergirds

5. Marshall, *Luke*, 553; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1006.

6. Plummer, *Luke*, 290: “from a short visit to Jerusalem which Lk. does not mention.”

7. Josephus, *B.J.* 5.4.2 (§142–45); Bahat, *Illustrated Atlas of Jerusalem*, 35, 39, 55.

passages in the Old Testament (see Ex. 20:5; Job 4:7; 8:4, 20; 22:5; also John 9:1–3). For Jesus, the deaths of the Galilean worshipers in Jerusalem and those caught in the collapse of the Siloam tower are not because they are “sinners above all” (13:2, 4). For him, they remain innocent, they stand free of blame. Their only mistake is to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. But their deaths, unlooked-for as they are, point up a person’s need to be ready to meet God in the next life, unburdened by sin.

These verses appear in no other ancient source, including the other Gospel accounts. It is evident that Luke’s careful research brings Jesus’ view on sin and suffering into the full light of day, much as it will in the story about the woman who has suffered “a spirit of infirmity eighteen years” (13:11–17), another report that Luke alone preserves. Here, and in the following parable of the fig tree, Luke shows himself independent of the other Gospel writers, apparently drawing on a special source or sources generally called “L” that stand behind a full one-third of his Gospel.⁸

The threefold concern with Galileans, of whom Jesus is one, raises to view the imminent suffering that faces him—he will suffer in the capital city and at the hands of the Roman prefect. Within the incidents that Luke introduces lie the threatening senses that the capital city is a menacing place and its ruler, Pilate, is a person to be feared.⁹ The lesson remains: bad things happen to good, innocent people. Jesus will not be exempt.

PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE (13:6–9)

(Compare Matt. 21:18–19; Mark 11:12–14)

King James Translation

6 He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. 7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the

New Rendition

6 And he spoke this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came to look for fruit on it and did not find. 7 And he said to his vine-dresser, ‘Behold, three years now I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree and have not found any. Cut it down! For why should it waste the soil?’ 8 And

8. Caird, *Luke*, 19–20; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:65–66, 82–85.

9. Green, *Luke*, 514.

ground? 8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: 9 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

answering he said to him, ‘Lord, leave it alone this year too until I dig around it and put on manure. 9 If it should produce fruit in the coming year, good; but if not, you will cut it down.’”

Notes

13:6 *this parable*: Jesus turns to the language of stories that carry a meaning beyond the plain sense of the words themselves. Adopting the view that a “typical parable . . . presents one single point of comparison” (see the Notes on 4:23, 5:36 and 8:4),¹⁰ even a casual reading of the next lines that frame a story about a fig tree points us toward the need for repentance, the main theme of Jesus’ prior remarks.

***man*:** As in 13:9, the Joseph Smith Translation substitutes a clarifying term for the KJV italicized word, in this case “husbandman,” plainly identifying the owner as a person who works the soil (JST 13:6).

***vineyard*:** In Luke’s Gospel, this term (Greek *ampelōn*) appears only here and in Jesus’ story about the vineyard that is leased to wicked men (see 20:9–16). That a fig tree grows in a vineyard should not surprise us because fruit trees of various sorts are noted as gracing vineyards (see Deut. 6:11; 22:9; 2 Kgs. 18:31; Micah 4:4; Jacob 5).¹¹ The usual Greek term for “orchard” (*kēpos*) appears in the New Testament with the meaning “garden” (see 13:19; John 18:1, 26; 19:41),¹² though in this verse the word *ampelōn* may mean orchard,¹³ and the Hebrew term for orchard (*karmel*) is common in the Old Testament wherein it is translated variously as the mountain Carmel (see Josh. 12:22; 19:26; 1 Sam. 15:12; 1 Kgs. 18:19–20, 42; 2 Kgs. 19:23; etc.), a thicket (see LXX Isa. 10:18), and as a vineyard (LXX Isa. 16:10).¹⁴

***found none*:** A sense of judgment already hangs over Jesus’ story with the note that the owner finds no fruit (see 13:7 for emphasis). For in the Old Testament, barrenness of fruit trees is a sign of divine punishment (see Jer. 8:13; Hab. 3:17; Hag. 2:19).¹⁵

10. Dodd, *Parables*, 18; also Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 295–99; Plummer, *Luke*, 125–26; *TDOT*, 9:64–67; *TDNT*, 5:744–61.

11. Jeremias, *Parables*, 170; John A. Tvedtnes, “Vineyard or Olive Orchard?” in Stephen D. Ricks and John W. Welch, eds., *The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1994), 477–83.

12. BAGD, 431.

13. BAGD, 46.

14. *TDOT*, 7:325–36.

15. *TDOT*, 15:547.

13:7 *three years*: The length of time seemingly does not point to the length of Jesus’ ministry, for Luke offers no hint about the ministry’s duration. Instead, the three-year interval evidently has to do with a period that the tree has not borne fruit, rather than the time from the planting of the tree, for the tree is too young to bear if only three years old. Besides, fruit that grows on a tree during the first three years after planting is regarded as “uncircumcised” and therefore is not to be eaten (see Lev. 19:23). Fruit develops on a mature fig tree’s new shoots that appear in the spring, ripening by late summer.¹⁶

***cut it down*:** The past tense (aorist) imperative illustrates that this act takes place once, and the tree is eliminated. The verb (Greek *ekkoptō*) appears in the Baptist’s warnings about the judgment of the Coming One, tying to the need of repentance (see 3:9).¹⁷ The appearance of the same verb in Paul’s allusion to a story of tame and wild olive trees recalls the allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5 (see Rom. 11:22, 24).

***why cumbereth it the ground?*:** A better sense is, “Why should the tree also waste ground that can be put to good use?” For fig trees are known to absorb many nutrients from the ground.¹⁸

13:8 *Lord*: The term is the now common title that Luke applies elsewhere to Jesus (Greek *kyrios*) with ties to Jehovah (see the Notes on 2:11; 5:8; 7:13, 31; 11:1, 39; 13:15, 23).¹⁹ By repeating this title, the identity bond between Jesus and Jehovah becomes all the tighter.

***let it alone this year*:** The vinedresser’s appeal for more time (1) shows experience with plants and their patterns of growth, for plants show change from year to year, and (2) buys the time wherein the fig tree can be coaxed into producing fruit. Each of these points, brought into a metaphorical sphere, finds application in the lives of persons who can and will repent—prolonging their years “that they might repent” (2 Ne. 2:21).

***dig about it, and dung it*:** Ancient horticultural practices emerge in these acts: digging the earth about the tree to loosen the soil, removing weeds, and fertilizing the plant (see Jacob 5:4, 11, 27, 64). It is common to pile animal dung (Greek *kopria*) into a heap for later spreading (see 14:35).²⁰

16. *TDNT*, 7:753; *TDOT*, 15:546; Jeremias, *Parables*, 170; Nogah Hareuveni, *Tree and Shrub in Our Biblical Heritage*, trans. Helen Frenkley (Kiryat Ono, Israel: Neot Kedumim, 1984), 91; Jacob and Jacob, “Flora,” 2:807.

17. BAGD, 241.

18. Marshall, *Luke*, 555; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1008; Jeremias, *Parables*, 170.

19. *TLNT*, 2:341–50; *TDNT*, 3:1039–63, 1081–95; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:200–2.

20. Liddell and Scott, *Lexicon*, 979; BAGD, 444; Wilford M. Hess, Daniel J. Fairbanks, John W. Welch, and Jonathan K. Driggs, “Botanical Aspects of Olive Culture Relevant to Jacob 5,” in Ricks and Welch, *Allegory of the Olive Tree*, 504–5.

13:9 *well*: The Joseph Smith Translation, as in 13:6, replaces this italicized word with a clearer expression: “the tree is saved” (JST 13:9), fitting the verse more snugly into Jesus’ concern for repentance. The fig tree, a pointer to material prosperity (see Micah 4:4), also becomes a metaphor for spiritual prosperity (see the Note on 21:29).²¹

***thou shalt cut*:** We notice that it is the owner who will do the cutting, or authorize it, not the vinedresser. Because of the severe consequences for the tree, the threatened action is to land in the hands of the master. In a metaphorical sense, the master is the judge of a person’s state of repentance.

Analysis

As a deep, throbbing cadence, the Savior’s drumbeat for repentance continues. In prior verses, he turns news of tragedy into an appeal for his hearers to live life in readiness to meet death unencumbered by sin (see 13:1–5). Here, in his parable of the barren fig tree, Jesus strikes the drum with a different beat, all while showing his mercy when signaling a delay in judgment—“let it alone this year” (13:8)—and his intent to pursue justice against those who persistently ignore or turn against his message—“cut it down” (13:7). But his generosity carries a limit within itself because a person does not have forever to repent—even though the time for changing is generous, this fig tree will be cut down next year (see 13:8–9; the Note on 13:25).

Punishment, however, does not come to the unrepentant as a sudden, unrestrained whim. Instead, the parable opens a window onto the divine consulting process wherein the Lord and others weigh the soul of the unredeemed and, in an act of mercy, decide to allow the sinner more time to turn back. To be sure, the Lord carries the responsibility in his hands, not his associates, but he shows a clear willingness to listen to pleas on behalf of others. In this light, the scene recalls the Lord’s willingness to warn his people of impending doom on other occasions, after discussion in his council (see Isa. 6:8; Jer. 23:22; also Amos 3:7).²² It also recalls his willingness, in an astonishing act of grace, to counsel with his Father on behalf of those who, though touched with sin and transgression, have shown repentant hearts: “Father, behold the sufferings and the death of him who did no sin. . . . Wherefore, Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name” (D&C 45:3–5).

Remarkably, certain elements of the parable resemble in striking ways components of the Allegory of Zenos (see Jacob 5). The resemblances do

21. Jeremias, *Parables*, 120.

22. E. Theodore Mullen, “Divine Assembly,” in *ABD*, 2:214–16.

not support a common origin for the parable and allegory, but they may well point to a common stock of stories that carry a similar message.²³ For instance, the action takes place in a vineyard (see 13:6; Jacob 5:3); most of the human interaction occurs between a master and a caretaker (see 13:7; Jacob 5:7, 10, etc.); the tree disappoints unexpectedly (see 13:6–7; Jacob 5:6, 25, 30–32, 39); the caretaker persuades the master to wait before rendering ultimate judgment (see 13:8–9; Jacob 5:26–27, 50); the offending tree takes up valuable space (see 13:7; Jacob 5:44, 49, 66); the caretaker seeks to bring the tree into fruition by digging and dunging (see 13:8; Jacob 5:4, 11, 27, 64); the ultimate judgment consists of cutting down the offending tree (see 13:7, 9; Jacob 5:42, 46–47, etc.); and the judgment about the first and last appears in the general context (see 13:30; Jacob 5:63). The chief difference, of course, is that the allegory pictures the master and caretaker grafting branches between trees, whereas this activity does not appear in Jesus' story about the fig tree.

Both Matthew and Mark record a story from the last week of Jesus' life wherein, out of season, he curses a barren fig tree (see Matt. 21:18–19; Mark 11:12–14). Although some see a connection between Jesus' act and the parable,²⁴ to propose such a connection seems rather fanciful, given the marked differences both in the settings of the reports and in Jesus' evident intentions.

THE INFIRM WOMAN (13:10–17)

King James Translation

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. 11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. 12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. 13 And he laid his hands

New Rendition

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. 11 And behold, there was a woman who had had a spirit of sickness for eighteen years. And she was doubled over and was unable to stand up entirely straight. 12 And seeing her, Jesus called to her and said, "Woman, you are released from your illness." 13 And he laid his

23. Bultmann, *History*, 204–5, and Jeremias, *Parables*, 170, suggest that Jesus' story derives from the old tale of Ahiqar.

24. Beare, *Earliest Records of Jesus*, 172.

on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. 15 The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? 16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? 17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

hands on her, and she was immediately made straight and glorified God.

14 But the leader of the synagogue, incensed that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, answering said to the crowd, “There are six days in which it is permitted to work, so on these you come and be healed, but not on the Sabbath day.” 15 But the Lord answering him said, “Hypocrites, does not each of you on the Sabbath loose his cow or donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? 16 But this woman, being a daughter of Abraham whom Satan has bound lo these eighteen years, is it not fitting that she be released from this bond on the Sabbath day?” 17 And after he had said these things, all those opposed to him were ashamed, and all the crowd rejoiced because of all the splendid things that happened because of him.

Notes

13:10 *And he was teaching:* The Joseph Smith Translation, remarkably consistent with Luke’s notations about time passing and Jesus traveling, adjusts these words to read: “And after this, as he was teaching” (JST 13:10).

teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath: For the last time in his Gospel, Luke takes us inside a synagogue where, in an expected pattern, Jesus’ words and actions challenge the norms of worship, causing an outburst from some attendees. It seems clear that Jesus pushes to heal the crippled woman on the Sabbath even though he need not do so because of her long-standing condition. He is evidently determined to show his view of the Sabbath while bringing deliverance to her (see the Notes on 6:9; 14:3; the Analysis on 4:31–37).²⁵ Luke’s notice, of course, offers a sense of the passing of time and of Jesus changing location as he travels to Jerusalem.

13:11 *spirit:* It is not clear why Luke writes this term unless he is anticipating Jesus’ pointer to Satan (see 13:16). One possibility has to do with a

25. Walter L. Liefeld and Ruth A. Tucker, *Daughters of the Church: Woman and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Academie Books, 1987), 30–31.

mental or spiritual condition that may accompany the woman's disease.²⁶ In a related vein, evil influences can control a person's physical abilities (see 11:14; Alma 15:3–5), as can divine influences (see 1:20).

infirmity eighteen years: Luke characterizes the woman's condition as a disease, as the occurrence of the Greek term for disease (*asthenai*) in other contexts demonstrates (see 5:15; 8:2; 13:12; Acts 28:9).²⁷ The number eighteen coincides with the number in 13:4 and may have served as a catchword connector whereby Luke then introduces the story of the woman in this context.

bowed together: The verb (Greek *synkuptō*) appears only here in the New Testament and is otherwise unusual.²⁸ We might think of workers who bend over for long periods of time and experience difficulty standing upright.

could in no wise lift up herself: In medical terms, the disease seems most likely to be an inflammation of the spinal cord that typically affects victims in their youth (*spondylitis ankylopoietica*).²⁹ The phrase "in no wise" may be rendered "to any degree" or it may mean "fully," thus carrying the sense either of the woman being unable to unbend at all or, a less severe condition, unable to stand completely straight (Greek *pantelēs*).³⁰ The Joseph Smith Translation favors the former understanding, changing "lift up herself" to "straighten up" (JST 13:11).

13:12 *when Jesus saw her, he called:* In this instance, Jesus initiates the action, not the woman. His mercy for a sufferer is active, not passive. Moreover, he picks her out from the attendees, noticing her in a way that others who have come to regard her in a demeaning light do not. They evidently view her condition as a result of God's disapproval, much as Elisabeth's acquaintances view hers (see the Note on 1:25).

Woman: This term of address is common in Jesus' day, and generally is respectful (see 22:57; John 2:4; 4:21; 8:10; 19:26; 20:13, 15).

thou art loosed: The perfect tense of the verb (Greek *apoluō*), which bears the general meaning of deliverance, conveys the sense of a permanent result, as it does elsewhere (see 5:20; 7:48).³¹ In addition, Jesus'

26. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 444-45; McConkie, *DNTC*, 1:493-94.

27. BAGD, 114.

28. Liddell and Scott, *Lexicon*, 1668; BAGD, 782.

29. John Wilkinson, "The Case of the Bent Woman in Luke 13:10-17," *Evangelical Quarterly* 49 (1977): 195-205; Marshall, *Luke*, 557.

30. BAGD, 613.

31. BAGD, 95-96; Marshall, *Luke*, 558.

deliverance of the woman fulfills his announced mission “to heal . . . [and] to set at liberty them that are bruised” (4:18).³²

thine infirmity: The Joseph Smith Translation changes the singular to plural, “thine infirmities,” pointing to more than one difficulty and relaxing the tension between a plain physiological condition, likely osteoporosis, and Satanic mischief (JST 13:12). For both may have been at evil play in her life. Such an adjustment opens the possibility that one of her challenges arises from those who see her condition as evidence that she is despised by God, and from her own fears that this is so (see the Notes on 1:25; 13:16).

13:13 *he laid his hands on her:* This instance is one of a few that Luke records in his Gospel wherein Jesus touches the recipient of his healing gift (see the Notes on 4:40; 5:13; 8:54; 18:15; see also 24:50). That this practice continues among his disciples is evident from later references to their activities (see Acts 6:6; 8:17–19; 9:17; 13:3; 19:6; 28:8).³³

immediately: The speed stands in contrast to the eighteen long years that the woman has suffered.³⁴

13:14 *ruler of the synagogue:* This person seems to have enjoyed overall supervision of the synagogue as a place of congregating, of worshiping, and of distributing alms (see 8:41, 49). He is likely also a benefactor of the synagogue, having assisted in its construction or refurbishing (see 7:5).³⁵

healed on the sabbath day: Here lies the crux of the question: whether an act of mercy, that is, a healing, is permitted on the Sabbath day. The same question arises when Jesus heals the man with the withered hand and the man afflicted with dropsy (see 6:6–11; 14:1–6). In each case, as in a law court, Jesus produces the physical evidence in the person of the healed man for his grasp of the Sabbath while his opponents flail at him with words.

said unto the people: The man does not address Jesus directly but, in an effort to turn the worshipers against him, appeals to those in the congregation.

There are six days: The synagogue ruler draws the crowd’s attention to the fourth commandment (see Ex. 20:9; Deut. 5:13).

ought to work: The expression is strong—a person “must work” only during the six days permitted by the law of Moses. The ruler’s statement gives voice to the view that certain activities, including acts of mercy, are considered work and are not permitted on the Sabbath.

32. Green, *Luke*, 522–23.

33. *TDNT*, 9:428–29, 431–32.

34. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1013.

35. Schürer, *History*, 2:433–39; Levine, *Ancient Synagogue*, 415–27.

13:15 *The Lord*: Luke’s title (Greek *kyrios*) is again consistent with Luke’s high Christology, equating Christ with Jehovah (see the Notes on 2:1; 5:8; 11:39 and 12:42).³⁶ In this episode, the title presents Jesus’ authority for overturning a restrictive view of the Sabbath.³⁷

***Thou hypocrite*:** The Greek term is plural and should read “hypocrites.” Hence, Jesus is addressing both “the ruler of the synagogue” (13:14) and “all his adversaries” (13:17).

***loose his ox or his ass*:** The “work” envisioned here is that of watering an animal rather than mounting a rescue operation, as in 14:5 (see the Note thereon). In later rabbinical law, the Sabbath can be superseded only by a pressing need or danger.³⁸

13:16 *a daughter of Abraham*: Jesus counters the ruler’s appeal to the fourth commandment by connecting his actions to an earlier personality, Abraham, the father of the faithful. In addition, the woman’s condition, much as Elisabeth’s barrenness, will be seen by acquaintances as evidence for God’s disapproval of her, to say nothing of her own now-skewed view of her standing before God (see the Notes on 1:25; 13:12; 23:29). Jesus’ willingness to call her a daughter of Abraham restores her to her proper place in society as a person of honor.³⁹

***whom Satan hath bound*:** How Satan has involved himself with the woman’s condition is unclear. From Luke’s description, it appears that she suffers from a disease that attacks her spinal column. But for some reason, Jesus sees more in her disease (see Job 2:1–7; 2 Ne. 2:27). In addition, by healing her, he is pushing back the powers and influence of Satan’s kingdom (see the introduction to chapter 4; the Notes on 10:19–20; the Analysis on 11:14–28).⁴⁰

***these eighteen years*:** Luke does not tell us when or how Jesus learns the duration of the woman’s difficulty. It seems that Luke intends us to conclude that Jesus knows her situation because of his supernatural powers, a conclusion that we also reach in Jesus’ raising of the only son of the widow of Nain (see 7:11–15).

13:17 *all his adversaries*: Present in the synagogue are those already predisposed to look on Jesus’ acts in a dull, negative light. Whether Luke

36. BAGD, 459–61; TDNT, 3:1058–62, 1086–93; TLNT, 2:347–50.

37. Green, *Luke*, 523.

38. TDNT, 7:14–15.

39. Green, *Luke*, 525–26.

40. TDNT, 3:213, 399–401; Green, *Luke*, 521.

thinks of them as part of the large crowd of people who are following Jesus is difficult to say (see 12:54; 13:1).

all the people: The expression means “the whole crowd.” Significantly, the Joseph Smith Translation changes these words to “all his disciples,” implying that those in Jesus’ entourage have packed the synagogue that day (JST 13:17).

Analysis

The Sabbath day dawns. All gather to the synagogue. Acts of worship approach. Sacred gifts rest in bags. Devotions hover. Scripture reading draws near. The stranger and his entourage enter the door. An unforgettable day begins.

The massive weight of this story, at first notice, lands on the proper use of the Sabbath day. The treatment of the Sabbath takes up dense space in Jesus’ society because “it is a sign between [God] and the children of Israel for ever” and stands as “a perpetual covenant” that binds him and his people together (Ex. 31:16–17). Therefore, under penalty of death, people are to do no work on the Sabbath, including no kindling of “fire throughout your habitations” (Ex. 35:3). But a second glance brings into focus another center of gravity that complements the first and adds heft. This one has to do with Jesus’ announced program for his ministry in the Nazareth synagogue: “The Spirit of the Lord . . . hath anointed me . . . to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised” (4:18). From one synagogue to another, from initial announcement to fulfillment, the two stories, one inside Nazareth and the other somewhere outside Galilee, uncover the heart of Jesus’ ministry, that of deliverance.

In another vein, Jesus’ appeal to Abraham not only points to himself as the true continuation of Israel’s destiny⁴¹ but also as the one who “is able of these [despised, crippled] stones to raise up children unto Abraham” (3:8). In a real sense, Jesus’ restoration of this worn-down woman lifts her back to her prior status as a Jewess of strength and vigor, back into the embrace of acquaintances and friends who have come to think ill of her, back to a proper state of self-worth. In a word, Jesus has healed her wholly—physically, socially, psychologically.

41. Green, *Luke*, 525–26.

In two verses (see 13:15–16), Jesus draws an important contrast between human beings and animals, illustrating the loftier importance of humans just as he does in his contrasts with sparrows and ravens (see 12:7, 24). His technique is to argue from the lesser to the greater:⁴² from an ox to a daughter of Abraham, from a rope that binds an animal for a few hours to a disease that binds a person for years, from a superseding of the Sabbath for the health of a tame beast to a superseding of the Sabbath for the sake of an unnoticed, quiescent woman.

PARABLES OF GROWTH AND EQUALITY (13:18–21)

(Compare Matt. 13:31–33; Mark 4:30–32)

King James Translation

18 Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it? 19 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? 21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

New Rendition

18 And he said, “What is like the kingdom of God and to what shall I compare it? 19 It is like a grain of mustard which a man took and cast into his own garden. And it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the sky made their home in its branches.”

20 And again he said, “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? 21 It is like yeast which a woman took and concealed in three measures of flour, until the whole was leavened.”

Notes

13:18 *the kingdom of God*: This common expression appears first on Jesus’ lips in 4:43 (see 7:28; 8:1, 10; 9:2, 11; etc.). In contrast, Matthew repeats the words “the kingdom of heaven,” a phrase that brings emphasis to the celestial ties between Jesus’ earthly realm and that of heaven. The expression “the kingdom of God,” on the other hand, draws attention to the one who stands at its head (see the Note on 6:20).

42. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1011–12; Green, *Luke*, 524.

resemble: Although the verb (Greek *homoioō*) bears the sense “to make like,” that meaning does not occur in the New Testament. The alternate sense of “to compare” is its meaning here.⁴³

13:19 a grain of mustard seed: In Mark’s similar parable, the seed is said to be smaller or “less than all the seeds that be in the earth” (Mark 4:31). The identity of the plant seems to be *sinapis nigra*, or black mustard, with black seeds. Other mustard species have seeds of other colors. This mustard plant grows to its full size in a single growing season.⁴⁴

a man: This word counterbalances the term “woman” in 13:21, a pairing that underscores Jesus’ intent to welcome both men and women into his kingdom (see the Note on 13:21).

cast into his garden: An air of casualness attaches to Jesus’ words whereas a more deliberate action is hinted in Matt. 13:31: “sowed in his field.” In contrast to a garden where vegetables and herbs grow (see 11:42), later rabbis mirror the notion that mustard plants grow in fields as well as in gardens.⁴⁵

a great tree: In the area of the Sea of Galilee, the black mustard plant grows to a height of eight to ten feet.⁴⁶ Some manuscripts omit the term “great” though the earliest (P⁴⁵) retains it.

the fowls of the air lodged in the branches: The verb (Greek *kataskēnoō*) denotes a lasting residence that marks the permanence of the end-time (see LXX Ps. 103:12).⁴⁷ The image of a special, divine tree where birds representing different nations and peoples roost under the canopy of its branches appears in Ezek. 31:6 and Dan. 4:12, 21. Joseph Smith taught that the fowls represent angels who come to the earth to prepare for the Lord’s Second Coming,⁴⁸ thus pointing to the eschatological character of the parable.⁴⁹

13:21 leaven: Jesus here spotlights the yeast element that makes dough rise. Rather than a dry ingredient, it consists of a dough mixture kept in an inert state, a part of which is used as a raising agent for a flour mix. Left for a time, the leaven mixed with flour is then ready for baking (see the Note on 12:1).⁵⁰

43. BAGD, 570; *TDNT*, 5:188–89.

44. *TDNT*, 7:288; Marshall, *Luke*, 561.

45. *Mishnah Kilaim* 2:9; 3:2.

46. *TDNT*, 7:288; Jeremias, *Parables*, 148; Marshall, *Luke*, 561; Jacob and Jacob, “Flora,” 2:812.

47. *TDNT*, 7:387–89; Jeremias, *Parables*, 147.

48. *TPJS*, 159.

49. Jeremias, *Parables*, 147.

50. Harrell F. Beck, “Leaven,” in *IDB*, 3:104–5; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:954–55.

a woman: The term, from a deliberate pairing, balances the word for “man” in 13:19, pointing to a kingdom that welcomes them both as full members (see the Analysis below). Jesus’ elevating of a woman in this parable highlights his obvious aim to raise the status of women when he calls the woman in the prior scene “a daughter of Abraham” (13:16). Importantly, Luke’s Gospel often repeats stories that feature a man and then a woman, a subtle yet clear illumination of women’s place in God’s divine hegemony.⁵¹

three measures: This amount is very large (about fifty pounds of flour; Greek *saton*, Hebrew *seah*), and estimates suggest that the resulting bread will feed 150 or more people. But the amount may be a traditional measure (see Gen. 18:6).⁵² With an unusual twist, Joseph Smith sees in this verse an allusion to the three witnesses whose leaven influences the growth of the church.⁵³

Analysis

The main emphases of Jesus’ two short parables rest squarely and comfortably on the growth of the kingdom of God and its nurturing powers. By bringing forward such stories, Jesus signals clearly that his kingdom is in its growing stages. He has called and empowered the Twelve as his governing officers; he has called and empowered the Seventy, whose reach spans into the gentile world; and hints lie throughout Luke’s report that Jesus has commissioned others to carry his message and healing powers (see the Notes on 9:49–50, 60; 10:2). As a growing plant and rising dough, the kingdom will mature majestically as an aid to those who choose to roost under the canopy of its branches.

In shaping his points, Jesus frames tasks that, first, a man undertakes—planting—and, second, that a woman performs—adding leaven to dough before baking. These are typical household chores, underlining a link to the home. By such an appeal, he reaches out to all in his audience, men and women alike, uncovering a subtle but bedrock message that he concerns himself with each person. We thus conclude that his kingdom will consist of men and women alike, and their homes, all on equal footing. This thrust

51. Compare 1:5–25 and 1:26–38; 2:25–35 and 2:36–38; 4:33–36 and 4:38–39; 7:2–10 and 7:11–16; 8:26–39 and 8:41–56; 15:4–7 and 15:8–10; Stein, *Luke*, 376, n. 156; Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 140, pair the parable of the Good Samaritan with the story of Martha and Mary (10:25–42) and the parable of the widow and judge with the parable of the Pharisee and publican (18:1–14).

52. Jeremias, *Parables*, 147; Marshall, *Luke*, 561.

53. *TPJS*, 100.

forms a complete, radical turnabout from his society, from any ancient Near Eastern society. His is not an organization that reaches out mainly to men in a recognition of the status quo wherein the voices and actions of women somehow rank lower than those of their male counterparts.⁵⁴ His church will fully and genuinely embrace everyone.

By repeating these short parables, Luke has rejoined the flow of Matthew's report and, in part, ties to Mark who recites a short parable about "a grain of mustard seed" (see Matt. 13:31–33; Mark 4:30–32). As Fitzmyer notices, the main similarities stand with Matthew's stories and thus point to the common source Q.⁵⁵ But attempting to settle the matter of a source may be somewhat slippery because, as Morris notes, Jesus may have repeated such stories in a number of settings with different emphases.⁵⁶ For in the versions preserved by Matthew and Mark, the contrast between the tiny size of the seed and the large size of the tree frames the emphasis. In Luke's account, Jesus says nothing about the size of the seed. Instead, the main gist of the parables rests on the end result of the growth—a benefit for all, whether a tree wherein birds can roost or bread for all to eat. Moreover, Luke's description of a setting for the parables may well have been original.⁵⁷

CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM (13:22–30)

(Compare Matt. 7:13–14, 21–23; 8:11–12)

King James Translation

22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. 23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, 24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and

New Rendition

22 And he went through cities and towns, teaching and making his way to Jerusalem. 23 And someone said to him, "Lord, are so few to be saved?" And he said to them, 24 "Struggle to enter through the straight gate, because many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

25 "When the master of the house has risen up and closed the gate, you will begin to stand outside and knock at

54. Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, 359–76; Falk, *Hebrew Law in Biblical Times*, 109–11.

55. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1015.

56. Morris, *Luke*, 245–46.

57. Plummer, *Luke*, 344.

to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: 26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. 27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. 28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. 29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. 30 And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

the gate saying, ‘Lord, open to us!’ And answering he will say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from.’ 26 And then you shall begin to say, ‘We ate and drank before you, and you taught in our streets.’ 27 And he will speak to you, saying, ‘I do not know you, where you are from; depart from me all who practice unrighteousness.’ 28 At that place will be weeping and grinding of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you are cast out. 29 And they will come from the east and west, from the north and south, and they will recline in the kingdom of God. 30 And behold, there are last who shall be first and first who shall be last.”

Notes

13:22 *he went through the cities and villages:* This note about Jesus’ continuing journey extends Luke’s first notice about Jesus’ deliberate act of leaving Galilee behind and turning to other regions as he makes his way toward Jerusalem (see 9:51; 10:38; 14:25; 17:11; JST 14:25). We may reasonably assume that, as in the past, he sends “messengers before his face” to broadcast his arrival and, as part of his missionary plan of action, to assist in gathering crowds (see 9:51–52, and the Note on 9:52). Because Greek does not possess a term for “town,” the word for “city” (Greek *polis*) does not refer to a large community by modern standards. Such locales possess perhaps a protective wall and a few dozen homes at most (see the Note on 1:26).⁵⁸

teaching, and journeying: For Luke these terms summarize the main dimensions of Jesus’ trek from Galilee. Of course, a person must also add into the picture Jesus’ few miracles from these weeks of travel (see 11:14; 13:10–17; 14:1–4; 17:12–14; 18:35–43).

13:23 *Then said one:* The questioner remains unidentified but, as if from a spokesperson, the question has to do with a major issue in peoples’ minds.

Lord: As in other passages, this term (Greek *kyrios*) elevates Jesus to the status of Jehovah (see the Notes on 13:8, 15, 25).

58. *TDNT*, 6:522–24.

are there few that be saved?: The question flags a major issue of discussion in Jesus' day (see 18:26). The later rabbis, doubtless reflecting much earlier discussions, held that all Israel will be saved except a few who are guilty of offensive actions or beliefs: "All Israelites have a share in the world to come . . . [but] these are they that have no share . . . he that says there is no resurrection . . . and [he that says] that the Law is not from Heaven, and an Epicurean," or unbeliever.⁵⁹ This view mirrors an earlier statement on the lips of John the Baptist that he imputes to some of his hearers: "we have kept the commandments of God, and none can inherit the promises but the children of Abraham" (JST 3:13). Sharing this same ground stands the view that "The Most High made this world for the sake of many, but the world to come for the sake of a few. . . . Many have been created, but few will be saved."⁶⁰

he said unto them: Even though the question comes from one person, the importance of the query leads Jesus to address all who have joined the crowd on this day. The scene illustrates that he is willing to take almost any question seriously and treat its framer with respect. Even the Joseph Smith Translation reading, "he answered him, and said" (JST 13:23), though clarifying that Jesus responds personally and directly to the questioner, leaves intact the observation that he is preaching to a large public (see 13:22 and JST 13:22).

13:24 *Strive to enter:* Jesus begins his reply with an imperative, plainly indicating that he knows the answer and that his hearers' response to the issue must consist of action, not merely thinking or discussing. The verb translated as "strive" (Greek *agōnizomai*) frequently ties to athletic contests and thus has to do with focused, intense effort.⁶¹ The expression discloses that Jesus believes neither that "all Israelites have a share in the world to come" nor that "but few will be saved" (see the Note on 13:23).

in at: The double preposition forms an awkward translation for the preposition that means "through" (Greek *dia*),⁶² a more natural rendering, "through the strait gate."

the strait gate: The scene that Jesus paints consists of a narrow gate by which a person enters or exits a city, or of a tight door to a home, as "strait" ("narrow") indicates (Greek *stenos*).⁶³ Gates or doors, of course, allow access, which is Jesus' point (see 11:7; 2 Ne. 31:18). In this case, the access

59. *Mishnah Sanhedrin* 10:1, in Danby, *Mishnah*, 397; Morris, *Luke*, 247.

60. 4 Ezra 8:1, 3, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:542.

61. *TDNT*, 1:134–39.

62. BAGD, 178–80.

63. BAGD, 773–74; *TDNT*, 7:604–6.

leads one into the kingdom, or to salvation, usually past a sentry (see James 5:9; 2 Ne. 9:41; 3 Ne. 27:33; D&C 132:18–19, 21–25).

many: Even though this term balances the word for “few” in 13:23, the number remains indefinite and therefore resists efforts to quantify it because this adjective (Greek *polloi*) here stands as a noun but without the definite article, “the many.”⁶⁴ In a similar saying in Matthew’s record, only “few” find their way through the gate (Matt. 7:14). Further, the “many” in Luke’s scene who cannot press through the gate stand in contrast to the “many” for whom Jesus makes his sacrifice (see Matt. 20:28; 26:28; Mark 10:45; 14:24).⁶⁵

I say unto you: Jesus invokes the authority of his own person; he does not draw on the authority of scripture or of any institution for what he now declares. Additionally, he addresses the gathering, for he repeats the plural “you.”

shall not be able: Jesus portrays these “many” as unable to press through the gate (see 16:16; 18:25). Their inability to enter has to do with their lack of determination, as the verb “strive” makes clear. An addition to the text just after this expression in the Joseph Smith Translation sharpens the point: “for the Lord shall not always strive with man” (JST 13:24). Further, as the next verse indicates, moving in a brisk, timely manner plays a key role in whether a person makes it through the gate.

13:25 master of the house: The term (Greek *oikodespotēs*) appears frequently in Jesus’ sayings and points to a homeowner of means (see 12:39; 14:21; 22:11).⁶⁶ An adjustment in the Joseph Smith Translation applies the term directly to the Savior: “the Lord of the kingdom” (JST 13:25). Because the “master” will be hosting “Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God” (13:28), the master’s house appears to be the temple or its heavenly equivalent (see John 8:35; 14:2).⁶⁷

is risen up: The image pictures a man who stands up from squatting or from sitting on a chair.

shut to the door: The unusual English idiom does not mask the fact that time runs out on those who dither about whether to respond to Jesus’ command or not (see the Analysis on 13:6–9). The sense that the door leads into Jesus’ kingdom is solidified in the Joseph Smith Translation, which augments this expression to read, “shut the door of the kingdom” (JST 13:25). Moreover, the master holds the keys to this door that leads to the

64. BAGD, 694.

65. TDNT, 6:543.

66. BAGD, 560; TDNT, 2:49.

67. TDNT, 5:122.

kingdom (see 11:52; the Notes on 4:25; 24:31–32, 45).⁶⁸ Further, from what follows, it is clear that the master is conducting a banquet inside the house, the signature event for those saved in the kingdom (see the Note on 13:28).⁶⁹

ye begin to stand without, and to knock: Jesus addresses his words to his audience, including his disciples. It is as if they are standing outside the door of the kingdom, unable to enter, a frightening prospect.

Lord, Lord: The double title appears only in certain manuscripts; the earliest (P⁷⁵) and other texts repeat only one occurrence of “Lord,” though the Joseph Smith Translation holds onto the iterated “Lord, Lord.” This title on Jesus’ lips (Greek *kyrios*), though in a mere story, points to him as Jehovah (see the Notes on 13:8, 15, 23).

I know you not whence ye are: The expression, repeated in 13:27, shows similarities to a saying in Matthew 7:23, “I know you not: depart from me” (see 13:27). Whereas the words recorded in Matthew present the sense that Jesus wants nothing to do with such people, this saying in Luke carries the meaning that Jesus is unwilling even to acknowledge those who are calling from without.⁷⁰ In a complete overhaul, but in keeping with Luke’s report of these words, the Joseph Smith Translation recomposes the entire line to read, “I will not receive you, for ye know not from whence ye are” (JST 13:25), essentially saying that the Lord, knowing their true lineage, refuses to receive into his home—here, his kingdom—those who are knocking at the door. Why? Because, in turning their backs on him, they do not come to grasp their own divine origin, here a vital piece of self-understanding, essentially a key word or concept that allows a person to enter the kingdom (see also JST 13:27; Mosiah 26:27).

13:26 *We have eaten and drunk in thy presence:* Those standing outside protest their exclusion because of their familiarity with the owner of the house. But an appeal to a former, perceived camaraderie—essentially a mere proximity—does not unlock the door. The reference to eating and drinking illustrates that people, including nondisciples, often enjoy table fellowship with Jesus, frequently not really hearing his message (see 5:29; 7:36, 49; 9:11–17; 11:37–53; 14:1).⁷¹ Other aspects, unnoticed by scholars, are found in Jesus’ words. Because his story is addressed to disciples, as well as to others, the reference to table fellowship with him bears an allusion to

68. *TDNT*, 3:744–53, 955–56.

69. Morris, *Luke*, 248; Green, *Luke*, 532.

70. Marshall, *Luke*, 566.

71. Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1966), 47, 204.

the coming institution of the Eucharist or sacrament. And the exclusion of some from their number carries an undertone of Judas's eating and drinking with him and then being excluded after breaking the fellowship of the Twelve (see 22:17–22).

13:27 *I know you not whence ye are:* Some manuscripts omit the pronoun *you*. This expression, repeated from 13:25, is completely altered in the Joseph Smith Translation where it reads, “ye know not from whence ye are” (JST 13:27). As with the change in 13:25, this turnabout signals, first, that the master knows those who stand outside his house and, second, that the outside petitioners lack a fundamental understanding of their true origin, here a decisively important omission (see the Note on 13:25).

depart from me: In this quotation from Psalm 6:8, the master does not allow the uninvited guests to remain in the vicinity where they will continue to make noise, but banishes them from the premises, permanently separating them from his company. In this sense, the words reflect an eventual judgment wherein some will be separated eternally from the Master (see Matt. 25:31–46; 1 Ne. 10:21; Alma 40:14; also D&C 29:27–29; 138:20, 29, 37). In another vein, Jesus' parable takes up a feature of his raising of Jairus's daughter when he banishes the wailing mourners from the home in order to create a proper atmosphere for releasing his powers (see the Notes on 4:41 and 8:54).

13:28 *There shall be:* The sense of the Greek expression, repeating the word for “there” (Greek *ekei*), is directional: “there, in that place, shall be.”⁷²

weeping and gnashing of teeth: Weeping in the place of banishment is to be expected (see 6:25); gnashing of teeth is a vivid image which appears only here in Luke's Gospel but is common in accounts retold by Matthew (see Matt. 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30). The origin of this latter image remains unknown, though it appears in Mosiah 16:2 and Alma 40:13, perhaps influenced by the plates of brass.⁷³

when ye shall see: Jesus' words picture an observation deck of sorts from which those who are banished can view those who are in the kingdom, making the separation all the more painful.⁷⁴ The notion that the outsiders are looking through an opening in the door is unrealistic on the model of doorways and gates in the old parts of cities in the Middle East.⁷⁵

72. Plummer, *Luke*, 28; BAGD, 238.

73. See also the apocryphal *Wisdom of Ben Sira* 51:3.

74. See 16:23; 2 Esd. 7:85, 93; 2 Bar. 51:5–6; in Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 2:508, 588; and in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:539–40, 638.

75. Marshall, *Luke*, 566, 567.

Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob: Invoking the names of the most famous of the Jews' ancestors leads to the conclusion that, on this occasion, the majority of Jesus' audience is Jewish. Earlier, Luke introduces readers to words from the Baptist and from Jesus that lay stress on Abraham (see 3:8; 13:16). In the scene that Jesus paints here, the righteous dead are present (see Matt. 8:11; D&C 132:37, 49; 133:55),⁷⁶ as they will be at the future banquet envisioned during the Last Supper (see the Notes on 4:3; 12:37; 13:25; 14:15; 22:16–18, 30; the Analysis on 4:1–13 and 9:10–17; also D&C 27:10; 58:8–11; 65:3).

and all the prophets: Only Luke preserves Jesus' sweeping words that point beyond the three famous ancestors, drawing up other words that Jesus utters about prophets, wherein he recalls their horrible fate (see 6:22–23; 11:47–50). In the end, they will sit with him in the kingdom.⁷⁷

13:29 *they shall come from the east:* This notation points above all to Gentiles whose proximity to Jewish people is closer on the east than in any other direction. Hence, Jesus' words open the kingdom to non-Jews, as do his actions of traveling in their midst, as he does during his journey to Jerusalem, and of sending out the seventy disciples, actions that may invite resentment, as earlier incidents in synagogues show (see 4:24–30; 13:14, 17; and the Note on 10:1). Because of the banqueting references, Jesus' words point back to Isaiah's prophecy about the feast of the Lord to which he will invite "all people" and for whom "he will destroy . . . the [spiritually dark] covering cast over [them]" (Isa. 25:6–7). Of course, Jesus may also be envisioning Jews living in the Diaspora who will return from the points of the compass. Thus, the images of the feast for all people and the gathering that are linked to this saying anticipate the end of time.⁷⁸

east . . . west . . . north . . . south: Besides pointing to God's dominion (see Isa. 43:5–6; Ps. 107:3), the saying is highly stylized, for the Mediterranean Sea lies to the west. Emphasis, therefore, sits on the two most important directions, the east and south, the first and the last in the list. The east, of course, points to the rising sun and the south draws attention to the region from which the summer sun brings its warmth. Not incidentally, the cardinal directions link to the temple,⁷⁹ and particularly to its orientation

76. Marshall, *Luke*, 567; Madsen, "Marriage Supper of the Lamb," 2:860; Smith, "Messianic Banquet," 4:788–91.

77. Green, *Luke*, 532–33.

78. Green, *Luke*, 528–29.

79. Hugh Nibley, "What Is a Temple?" in *The Temple in Antiquity*, ed. Truman G. Madsen (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984), 19–37.

toward the east, to its altar of sacrifice, which stands just south of the east-west line that bisects the center of the temple, and to its sanctuary where the source of light, the seven-branch candelabrum, stands on the south side of the veil (see the Note on 1:11).⁸⁰

shall sit down: The verb (Greek *anaklinō*), in the passive voice, means to recline at a meal rather than to sit down, as it does in the cases of similar verbs (see the Note on 7:36). Hence, the occasion is a banquet.⁸¹

13:30 last which shall be first: In other occurrences of this sort of expression, the context is that of judgment or the end-time (see 1 Ne. 13:42; Ether 13:12; D&C 29:30). This dimension is cemented by the future tenses of the verbs in Luke’s report. Another overlay that stretches over such sayings has to do with Jew and Gentile, implying that Gentiles will become as much a covenant people as Jews (see Rom. 9–11).⁸²

shall be last: Significantly, the Joseph Smith Translation adds a summarizing sentence at the end of this verse: “and shall be saved therein” (JST 13:30). This expression cements Jesus’ discussion of salvation, bringing a closure of sorts to the original question in 13:23, “are there few that be saved?”

Analysis

As a bright example, the Savior models for his followers their eventual missionary tasks: “teaching, and journeying” (13:22). This will be their pattern. For himself, he keeps moving along the path of his journey in part because of the rejection that he experiences in the synagogue where he heals the woman afflicted by an eighteen-year-old disease. A person can infer that this kind of repudiation is common, even though messengers are traveling ahead of him and preparing people to hear him (see 9:52). Such rejection, from devout Jews, will also characterize the frustrating future of his disciples (see 21:12). And when they travel without purse or scrip (see 9:3; 10:4), as he is doing, they will have “not where to lay [their] head” (9:58). But, as he, they are to persist because salvation awaits both them and many of their hearers, as the man’s question coaxes to the fore: “are there few that be saved?” (13:23). The fact that Jesus is not stopping during his journey points to the need for people to make a decision in this moment, in his presence.⁸³

80. Ritmeyer and Ritmeyer, *Ritual of the Temple*, 13, 17, 24, 41.

81. BAGD, 55; Marshall, *Luke*, 568; Morris, *Luke*, 248.

82. Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1959), 36–68, 247–81; Bruce, *Paul*, 333–36; Marshall, *Luke*, 568.

83. Green, *Luke*, 529.

He will not return. Further, within Jesus' story of the guests who are locked out of the banquet hovers the notion that the time for people to respond grows threateningly short (see 13:25–29).⁸⁴

The ember that first glows and then bursts into flame is sparked by the hearer's question, "are there few that be saved?" The underlying issue—Who will be saved?—has become a heated talking point in Jesus' society: will "all Israelites have a share in the world to come" or will "but few . . . be saved"?⁸⁵ In a real sense, this question undergirds all of Jesus' teaching from 13:24, beginning with his insistence that a person must "strive to enter in at the strait gate," and ending with his observations about duty (see 17:10).⁸⁶

The grand soothing experience for those who are saved, of course, comes at the celestial banquet. Here the dedicated disciple finally sits with and is acknowledged by the Lord; here the faithful follower rubs shoulders with "Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob"; here the adamant adherent enjoys the heady company of "all the prophets" (13:28); here the devoted servant accepts the heavenly reward in a palpable and physical way, complete with odors and tastes and enlivening conversation. Rich references to this moment of moments lie in scripture and elsewhere, beginning with Isaiah's sketch: "in this [holy] mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined" (Isa. 25:6). But more than a social event, the gathering will also see God "destroy . . . the face of the [dark] covering cast over all people, and the [benighted] veil that is spread over all nations." There, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces" (Isa. 25:7–8).

Isaiah's pointer to "all people" draws attention to Jesus' intent. For, irrespective of ethnic origin, he reaches out to those "from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south." To all he issues the invitation to "sit down in the kingdom of God" (13:29); to all he commands, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate" (13:24). From the earliest of his public utterances, in the Nazareth synagogue, Jesus has pointed to Gentiles, underscoring in that setting God's gracious acts to the widow of Zarephath and to the Syrian general Naaman through his servants Elijah and Elisha (see 4:25–27).

Besides the image of the banquet, Jesus' words set out another dominating figure, that of the narrow gate or door. The symbol, of course, has to

84. Jeremias, *Parables*, 171.

85. *Mishnah Sanhedrin* 10:1; 4 Ezra 8:3; see the Note on 13:23.

86. Green, *Luke*, 528.

do with entering or not entering. And, not surprisingly, it has to do with whether and how a person accepts Jesus.⁸⁷ At base, entry into the kingdom comes only by consistent, hard effort, as other passages illustrate—for “every man [who seeks to enter] presseth into it” (16:16). A casual approach to the gate will not gain us entry. In the most vivid scene painted by Jesus, we are to grasp that “it is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God” (18:25). Here, Jesus underlines in illumining language the enormously challenging task that faces anyone who wishes to gain entrance.

Another dimension competes for center stage. For all of the talk that all people are invited into the kingdom and ethnic origin plays no ultimate role, the matter of one’s origin raises its head in these verses, but not in an ethnic sense—Jew versus Gentile. Rather, it has to do with a person’s knowledge of his or her divine origin. In Luke’s report, the master’s reason for refusing entry to those outside after he shuts the door has to do with his lack of knowing where they come from: “I know you not whence ye are” (13:25, 27). In light of Luke’s portrait of Jesus as the one who knows even people’s thoughts (see 5:22; 6:8), this statement makes no sense as it applies to him. Notably, the Joseph Smith Translation tips this scene sideways. To those who are standing outside the door, the Master says, “Ye know not from whence ye are” (JST 13:25, 27). In this light, those who are within acknowledge what those without do not—they know their divine origin, an element of understanding that they can obtain only from Jesus and not from their current religious environment. This observation makes clearer sense of the protesters’ claim that they are familiar with the master: “We have eaten and drunk in thy presence.” But mere familiarity does not open the door, for they have not taken from him, when he “taught in [their] streets” (13:26), one of the key doctrines that he offers, the one that discloses their true origin.

This element of familiarity leads to a final point. Many see Jesus’ story as mostly deriving from the source Q because Matthew reports a similar teaching (see Matt. 7:21–23).⁸⁸ But the whole concern with familiarity does not rise in Matthew’s version, undercutting any serious attempt to connect the sayings to a common source.⁸⁹ Moreover, the scene that Jesus paints in Luke’s version is much more vivid, having to do with the master rising up

87. *TDNT*, 7:606.

88. Marshall, *Luke*, 563–64; Johnson, *Luke*, 219.

89. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1021–22.

from his chair or his haunches and shutting the door at nightfall, dimensions missing from Matthew's report. Instead, Luke brings forward Jesus' story with a rather independent glow instead of one that points to borrowing from a shared source.

JERUSALEM'S FUTURE (13:31–35)

(Compare Matt. 23:37–39)

King James Translation

31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. 32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. 33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! 35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

New Rendition

31 In the same hour, some Pharisees came to him saying, "Get out and go from here, because Herod wants to kill you." 32 And he said to them, "When you have gone, tell this fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and I perform healings both today and tomorrow, and the third day I will be brought to completion.' 33 Nevertheless, I must go today and tomorrow and the day following, for it is impossible that a prophet perish outside of Jerusalem."

34 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who slays the prophets and stones those sent to her—how often I have wanted to gather in your children in the way a hen brings her brood under her wings, and you did not want it. 35 Behold, your house shall be abandoned to you. And I say to you, you shall not see me until you will say, 'Blessed be he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Notes

13:31 *The same day*: This notice frames one of the few notations of time in this journey section (see 9:51; 12:1; 13:1; 14:1).

certain of the Pharisees: In contrast to the Pharisees with whom Jesus differs (see 5:21, 30–32; 6:2, 7; 7:36–50; 11:37–44, 53–54; 15:2; 16:14; 19:39),

this group seems to be well-disposed toward him, warning him of Herod Antipas's ill intent, perhaps anticipating the day when some Pharisees will affiliate with the church (see Acts 15:5). We suspect that they come from Galilee, Herod's dominion, rather than from Jerusalem.

Get thee out, and depart hence: The locale for the warning is indefinite, but may be within the territory of Perea, lying on the east side of the Jordan river, which Herod controls.⁹⁰

Herod: This person is Herod Antipas, who is “not born earlier than 20 B.C.” and becomes tetrarch of Galilee in 4 BC when but a teenager (see the Notes on 3:1 and 9:7).⁹¹

will kill thee: Herod's intent here goes menacingly beyond the intense curiosity toward Jesus that is attributed to him in other passages (see 9:7–9; 23:8–11). But Herod's willingness to imprison and execute the Baptist and to join in the effort to inflict death on Jesus are well attested in scripture (see 3:19–20; Matt. 14:3–12; Mark 6:17–29; Acts 4:27).

13:32 Go ye, and tell: Jesus' directive seems to be more rhetorical than a real command to the Pharisees to go to Herod's palace and report his words.⁹²

that fox: The term (Greek *alōpēx*), appearing only here and at 9:58 in Luke's Gospel, carries the meaning of a clever or crafty person in Classical and Hellenistic literature. In the Old Testament, the equivalent Hebrew word *shu'al* comes to mean a foolish prophet (see Ezek. 13:4). In this context, Jesus' word appears to bear both meanings, a crafty person and a foolish one.⁹³ The Joseph Smith Translation simply substitutes the name Herod for this expression (see JST 13:32), thereby hinting that Jesus is serious about the Pharisees somehow conveying his words to the tetrarch.

I cast out devils, and I do cures . . . I shall be perfected: Besides summarizing Jesus' ministry, the verbs stand in the present tense, underscoring in vivid terms Jesus' ongoing efforts. But, as with the translation of the last verb, the present points to the future and can be rendered as an anticipated, future activity.⁹⁴

to day and to morrow: On the strength of Exodus 19:10, the phrase can mean “for two days.” It can also point to an indefinite period of time during

90. Aharoni and others, *Carta Bible Atlas*, map 223.

91. Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 12.

92. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1031.

93. Liddell and Scott, *Lexicon*, 75; BDB, 1043; Marshall, *Luke*, 571; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1031.

94. C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: University Press, 1960), 7.

which Jesus accomplishes his work, ending at a specified moment, “the third day.”⁹⁵

the third day: Jesus’ words point to and anticipate the day of his resurrection (see 9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46).⁹⁶

I shall be perfected: The verb (Greek *teleioō*), here in the passive voice, bears a rich set of meanings. At base, in the active voice it means “to bring to completeness, wholeness”; it has to do with finishing what is begun.⁹⁷ The passive indicates that another person—the Father in this case—is involved in Jesus’ completion, in his perfection (see the Notes on 12:50; 14:11; 16:11; 18:31; 22:37; 24:31, 44).⁹⁸ Behind Jesus’ expression lies the sense of carrying out a required course that begins with a formal, divine commission to him that ties back to his ordination (see the Notes on 3:2 and 4:18). Although Jesus’ words here do not reflect a ceremonial setting, the verb *teleioō* can embrace sacred acts, including the act of consecrating a person, Jesus in this case, to God’s service by filling the hands (see LXX Ex. 29:9, 29, 33, 35; Lev. 4:5; 16:32; etc.).⁹⁹

13:33 *I must walk:* The terrible imperative that lies atop Jesus’ journey (see 9:51) stands forth in his words about the threatening events that await him in the capital city. The Greek impersonal verb *dei* that is translated “must” highlights the divine necessity that lies across Jesus’ ministry and suffering (see 2:49; 4:43; 9:22; 17:25; 22:37; 24:7, 44, 46; the Note on 19:5).¹⁰⁰

the day following: In an important change that aims this series of sayings toward Jesus’ Atonement, the Joseph Smith Translation changes these words to read “the third day” (JST 13:33).

it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem: Although no evidence exists that Jesus is quoting a popular saying, his words point both to executions of prophets in the capital city and to his view that, by his death, he will be reckoned among Israel’s prophets (see 2 Kgs. 21:16; 2 Chr. 24:20–22; Jer. 26:20–23).¹⁰¹ Notably, the Joseph Smith Translation adds a sentence at this juncture that interprets the scene Jesus is describing and secures the ultimate relevance of his journey to Jerusalem: “This he spake signifying of his death” (JST 13:34).

95. Marshall, *Luke*, 571–72; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1031.

96. McConkie, *DNTC*, 1:498.

97. BAGD, 817–18; *TDNT*, 8:84.

98. Blass and Debrunner, *Greek Grammar*, §§313,(1)130; Jeremias, *Parables*, 122, n. 33; Marshall, *Luke*, 898; Johnson, *Luke*, 227.

99. *TDNT*, 8:79–84.

100. *TDNT*, 2:22–25.

101. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1032.

13:34 *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem:* Jesus' words addressed to Jerusalem seem to come forth because he mentions Jerusalem as a part of the prophecy of his death (see 13:33). We are struck by the centrality of Jerusalem in his words. Although Matthew's account locates Jesus' saying at a later date when he is teaching in the city (see Matt. 23:37–39), it is not impossible that Jesus speaks this way while at a distance from the city, as he is at this moment (see 13:22), a notion that receives strength from a hint in modern scripture that he speaks this way before arriving in the capital city: "this [prophecy] I have told you concerning Jerusalem" (D&C 45:24). This same passage also certifies that Jesus teaches about his Second Coming long before reaching Jerusalem, and the Second Coming is regularly linked to his teachings about the fate of the city as we learn later in Luke's record (see 21:20–27; D&C 45:22–23; the Note on 17:22). Moreover, the Joseph Smith Translation buttresses Luke's placement of Jesus' initial teaching about Jerusalem's fate at this early date by adding, "And in this very hour he began to weep over Jerusalem" (JST 13:34). Concerning the scenes that may be before Jesus' prophetic eyes, see 19:41–44.

which killest: The Joseph Smith Translation alters these words to a more personal form of address by adding one word and changing another: "*thou who killest*" (JST 13:35; emphasis added).

how often would I have gathered thy children: In Luke's reconstruction of the Savior's life, Jesus does not visit Jerusalem after beginning his ministry, though we know from John's Gospel that he goes to the city for special events (see John 2:13; 5:1; 7:10; 11:17–18). Jesus' reference, therefore, points both to prior visits not noted by Luke,¹⁰² showing a gap in his record (see the Notes on 10:30, 38; 13:1; 19:47; 22:9; 23:5, 28, 50; and 24:13),¹⁰³ and to his own past efforts as Israel's Lord to bring his people to himself.

as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings: According to Matthew, Jesus gives voice to this famous imagery during the last week of his life in Jerusalem (see Matt. 23:37), furnishing us with another possible instance of Jesus uttering a saying in two or three different settings.¹⁰⁴ This imagery also appears in modern scripture (see D&C 29:2; 43:24; 3 Ne. 10:4–6).

ye would not: Here stands the damning line. The verb (Greek *thelō*) has to do with one's desire and will.¹⁰⁵ Hence, citizens of the capital city choose

102. Marshall, *Luke*, 574–75.

103. Plummer, *Luke*, 290: "from a short visit to Jerusalem which Lk. does not mention."

104. Plummer, *Luke*, 437; Jeremias, *Parables*, 107–8, 115, 202; *TDNT*, 2:631, n. 29; 4:326; Marshall, *Luke*, 701; Morris, *Luke*, 299; Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 286.

105. BAGD, 355–56.

not to respond. It is not a case of ignorance; it is not a case of missed opportunity; it is not a case of misunderstanding.

13:35 *your house*: Which house does Jesus mean? On the surface, the term points to the temple. Both the Hebrew and Greek words for “house” (Hebrew *bayit*, Greek *oikos*) often refer to the temple.¹⁰⁶ In the Old Testament, Jeremiah issues warnings against the temple, against God’s “house” (see Jer. 12:7; 22:5).¹⁰⁷ Perhaps significantly, the voice of the crucified Jesus, heard in the New World after the lamentation over the house of Israel—instead of Jerusalem—says “the places of your dwellings shall become desolate” (3 Ne. 10:7), apparently drawing attention to places of residence—homes—a possible meaning in Jesus’ words recorded here by Luke.¹⁰⁸

***left unto you desolate*:** The Risen Jesus speaks almost the same words in 3 Nephi 10:7, though the earliest New Testament manuscripts, \mathfrak{P}^{45} and \mathfrak{P}^{75} , omit the term “desolate” (Greek *erēmos*).

***Ye shall not see me*:** In contrast to Simeon, who sees God’s son and rejoices (see 1:30),¹⁰⁹ those who eventually see Jesus in this context will do so only after experiencing desolation because they reject him (see 21:24; 1 Ne. 15:17; 19:14; 2 Ne. 6:9–10; 25:12–15). The Joseph Smith Translation changes the expression and makes a merciful addition: “Ye shall not know me, until ye have received from the hand of the Lord a just recompense for all your sins” (JST 13:36), implying that, after the city’s citizens suffer punishment, the Savior, in mercy, will allow his hearers to come to know him as he is (see Isa. 40:1–2).

***he that cometh*:** The Greek verb *erchomai* recalls the “coming one” about whom John the Baptist prophesies (see 3:16 and 19:38, and the Notes thereon; the Analysis on 3:7–20; 19:28–40; 19:45–48; 22:39–46).

Analysis

Framed amidst the exalted language of the Psalmist, “Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Ps. 118:26), the scene begins with Herod’s threat against the Savior and ends with Jerusalem’s desolation. The city is Jesus’ destination (see 9:51), and Herod and his allies will not deter his destiny. Yet, when he arrives, Jerusalem will sadly fill its stereotypical reputation, that of killing “the prophets” and stoning “them that are sent unto [its people]” (13:34). Within all this talk lies the simple but stark

106. *TLOT*, 1:234–236; *TDNT*, 5:120–122.

107. Marshall, *Luke*, 576; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1036–37.

108. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1037.

109. Green, *Luke*, 538.

imperative—“I must walk” (13:33)—that Jesus must undertake his daunting, ultimate act in the city, the center of Jewish worship and identity. In a word, Jesus’ foreordained destiny is tied to Jerusalem, and his fate will be the city’s fate.¹¹⁰

These verses capture Jesus’ tender feelings for the city and its citizens, feelings that are gnawed at and frayed by the inhabitants’ conscious turning away from his attempts to reach out to them and their fellow countrymen: “how often would I have gathered thy children together, . . . and ye would not” (13:34). Even so, as hinted in the Joseph Smith Translation, he will allow the people of this sacred center, who are stained by their hostility toward their Savior, to come to know him, but only after they “have received from the hand of the Lord a just recompense for all [their] sins” and thereby are cleansed (JST 13:36).

Woven into the tapestry of these lines rests the threads of his Atonement. As Jesus reminds his hearers, on “the third day I shall be perfected” (13:32), an experience that will take place in Jerusalem, for “a prophet [cannot] perish out of Jerusalem” (13:33). As a bright coloration, the Joseph Smith Translation adds emphasis to the Atonement. For at the end of Jesus’ declaration that “a prophet [cannot] perish out of Jerusalem,” the JST inserts: “This he spake signifying of his death.” (JST 13:34). Moreover, the element of judgment that appears in the adjusted and added words of Jesus, “Ye shall not know me, until ye have received from the hand of the Lord a just recompense for all your sins,” raises one of the important results of the Atonement, that of the divine evaluation of a person’s mortal acts.

Jesus’ lament in 13:34–35 is generally assigned to Q, a theorized source that is thought to lie behind the records of Matthew and Luke.¹¹¹ But Matthew’s record places these words within the last week of Jesus’ life, an entirely different setting from that of Luke (see Matt. 23:37–39). Is Matthew’s setting original? Not necessarily. Although Jesus’ words fit nicely within the context of his last days in Jerusalem, as Matthew reports them, the nudge to say something about Jerusalem in connection with the threat from Herod, an incident that only Luke retells, makes Jesus’ lament a very natural response to the menacing words of a ruler who controls the territory where Jesus is now standing but does not control the place of Jesus’ Atonement. Further, the Joseph Smith Translation strengthens the originality of Luke’s record by noting that, just before the lament, in fact “in this very hour [Jesus] began to weep over Jerusalem” (JST 13:34).

110. Green, *Luke*, 534.

111. Marshall, *Luke*, 573; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1034.