Luke 6

Luke 6:1–5. The Question of the Sabbath

The following is adapted from S. Kent Brown, The Testimony of Luke *(Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2015), 310–311.*

The Sabbath day, and how to keep it as a special, holy day, lies at the heart of this report in Luke 6:1–5. To be sure, the Savior has been preaching and healing on Sabbath days, activities that themselves bring forward no objections except as the content of sermons create discomfort in His hearers, as in Nazareth (Luke 4:16–30). In the case before us, it is the actions of Jesus's disciples that cut across Pharisees' sensibilities, in two ways. First, for Pharisees, foods form a foundation of their devotion to God—how to harvest and prepare foods, whether to tithe them, from whom to purchase them, and when to make an offering of them. As a general point, the law of Moses allows a person to pick ripe heads of grain when passing through a field. But the casual acts of the disciples in picking grain to eat become objectionable because they are picking and rubbing the grain heads on a Sabbath day, an important issue for Pharisees and even for most Jews. For them, these actions count as the physical labor needed to harvest, thresh, and winnow grain. The occasion offers opportunity for Jesus to begin to put His own stamp on the Sabbath.

The most important piece of this narrative consists of Jesus naming Himself as Lord of the Sabbath day. Here lies another announcement of who He is, complementing His revealing declaration in Nazareth. This time His disciples hear His bold words, doubtless setting them to wonder. This time, as in Nazareth, Jesus appeals to scripture, interpreting it in such a way that leaves no doubt about His views—human needs supersede all. In fact, meeting human needs carries and sustains the proper spirit of the Sabbath. Meeting human needs garnishes and sweetens Jesus's actions on the Sabbath, as Luke's following story will illustrate.

The Savior's appeal to David, of course, allows Him to make His point about human needs as well as to show His self-conscious efforts to link Himself both with the past and with what is authoritative (see note on Luke 20:41–44). Even though David's act of eating bread baked for the sanctuary, bread that only priests are to consume, is strictly illegal in the light of the Mosaic law, his need for bread overrides the legal niceties of the moment. The priest Ahimelech senses and meets that need, even though his unusual generosity costs him and others their lives (1 Samuel 22:9–19). In a way, the priest's fate that follows his generous act, a story known to Jesus's hearers, confers a sacredness on his generosity that comes in no other way. And Jesus' choice of this story of meeting human needs and then paying the ultimate cost draws in this sense of the sacred when He makes His case about the Sabbath. Not surprisingly, the same pattern appears in His approach to His Atonement.

Pointing to David also underscores the Savior's connections to that king. Throughout Luke's Gospel and his book of Acts, we come upon these overt links.[1] In the story of picking grain, Jesus in effect becomes David because He possesses the right to enter the house of God and partake of that which is holy. Moreover, the sequence of the verbs "did take and eat . . . and gave" (Luke 6:4) vividly recalls the acts of a king at a royal banquet and perhaps purposely anticipates Jesus as host at the messianic banquet in the future age (see the notes on Luke 22:16, 18, 30).

Luke 6:6–12. The Man with the Withered Hand

The following is adapted from S. Kent Brown, The Testimony of Luke *(Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2015), 316–318.*

In the story of the man with the withered hand, many currents run together. First, a set of issues surround the man himself as a social and religious outcast in his own society. This situation arises because his right hand is crippled in some way, and he therefore cannot interact properly with others. His lot is to meet his needs, including ablutions and eating, with his good left hand. As a result, no one will invite him to dinner nor will anyone shake his hand in greeting. In his society, the left hand is the cursed hand (Matthew 25:33). Hence, he cannot participate in sacred acts that require a person's right hand. Jesus makes him whole, solving all these difficulties. Hence, in a brief moment, he is healed physically, socially, and religiously.

Second, we effectively behold a painting of the Savior as both legal opponent of His detractors and their judge, a dual capacity that Jehovah fills (1 Kings 2:10 LXX; Isaiah 41:11). Jesus's second role as judge hints broadly that He will ultimately be judge of all. The texture of His words clearly portrays Him as judge: "Is it lawful . . . ?" He knows the smoldering thoughts of His detractors, and by healing the man, He offers irrefutable proof to all present of His merciful, open view that Sabbath day activities are to bring relief, unless a person believes the devil stands behind His miracles (Luke 11:15; Mosiah 3:9). By stepping to the middle of the room, inviting the afflicted man to join Him, and asking the question "Is it

lawful?" He turns the synagogue into a religious courtroom. Then He produces the evidence—the man's hand made whole—that acts of mercy belong on the Sabbath. Even so, some do not believe, revealing in Mark's words the "hardness of their hearts" (Mark 3:5).

Third, as has become apparent, the main dividing issue focuses on Sabbath observance. The Sabbath has been "a sign" and has framed "a perpetual covenant" between God and His people for centuries. Dishonoring the Sabbath can mean "death" for an offender. These elements of the law, going all the way back to "the seventh day [whereon God] rested" and guiding people's efforts for centuries who seek to please and obey Him, help to explain the hot feelings among Jesus's detractors (Exodus 31:13–17). Jesus is pushing against hoary tradition, and He knows it. But raising fundamental questions about the beloved Sabbath allows Him to bring His own agenda quickly and forcefully into the consciousness of His hearers. Moreover, this story establishes Jesus's dominion over the Sabbath, welding it to His already visible authority and power.

Fourth, we come upon the very occasion when the Savior forces His silent opponents into the open and exposes their freshly hatched conspiracy. That this event occurs on a Sabbath day and in a place of worship adds a layer of irony to their undercutting actions, especially in light of the divine prohibition not to kill (Exodus 20:13). From this day forward, the plot grows as it extends its insidious, malevolent tentacles over people who are in positions of influence and power. In our story, we encounter the scribes and Pharisees living and working in Galilee. But eventually the conspiracy will travel southward to Judea and settle itself maliciously among the chief priests and captains of the Jerusalem temple who already have their reasons for getting rid of Jesus.[2]

It is also worth noting that the topographical notes underlying these verses show an impressive accuracy to the geographical terrain. Luke mentions a mountain where Jesus gathers His disciples and chooses the Twelve, as does Mark (Luke 6:12; Mark 3:13). But only Luke reports Jesus's coming down to "the plain" (Luke 6:17). This combination of mountain and plain, remarkably, fits the landscape along the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. The north end of the lake, of course, is the evident place where all events of Luke 5 take place as well as the implicit locale for events recorded in Luke 6. This circumstance points either to Luke's first-hand knowledge of the area or to the accuracy of his source.

Luke 6:13–16. Choosing the Twelve

The following is adapted from S. Kent Brown, The Testimony of Luke *(Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2015), 323–326.*

The Savior's calling of the Twelve takes its rightful place as one of His most significant acts in gospel history. Before this moment, Jesus gathers followers in both a formal and informal manner. Those who have stood closest to Him during these past weeks witness extraordinary miracles and hear remarkable

wisdom from Him. Now Jesus authoritatively ties the knot that will bind these men to Him. Their evident willingness to accept his invitation, though unreported, stands plainly between the lines of Luke's report.

The number twelve displays several possible connections. The most obvious tie appears in the number of Israelite tribes that come to the land of Canaan and, under the leadership of Joshua, join themselves in a common bond of faith and communal purpose (see Joshua 24). In this sense, the chosen Twelve represent the new Israel, the new people of God, the new bearers of God's covenant.

A second link connects back to the family of Jacob and his twelve sons, the forebears of the tribes. This link underscores the concept of family, not exclusively in the sense that Jacob's family survives and inherits a promised land, a notion that ties to the twelve Israelite tribes, but especially with the meaning that Jesus's twelve Apostles both represent a number linked to a family and, correspondingly, will promote family ideals within His movement.

A third possible connection, though more remote, taps into the celestial world. The number twelve reminds one of the months of the year and the chambers of the south through which the sun passes on its annual journey. The luminous appearance of the Twelve in a vision of Lehi whose "brightness did exceed that of the stars" openly points to this tie (1 Nephi 1:10). Hence, in this view, the number twelve carries a metaphoric, celestial quality that highlights a connecting thread to heaven.

Although scholars have raised questions about whether Jesus Himself institutes the title "Apostles" for the Twelve or whether this title arises long after His Resurrection, other scriptural accounts direct light on the matter. From a vision that features the future Messiah, the youthful prophet Nephi writes a pair of observations that are relevant. First, in three separate passages we meet the expression "the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (1 Nephi 11:35–36; 12:9). Clearly, the language implies strongly that "the twelve apostles" are linked to "the Lamb," the Messiah. But when is the connection forged? The second element clarifies. Earlier in his vision, Nephi beholds an infant whom an angel calls "the Lamb," specifically "the Lamb of God" (1 Nephi 11:21). Here "the Lamb" is fully human, though a newborn. In this light, the expression "the twelve apostles of the Lamb" evidently points to a time during the Messiah's mortality, not afterward. Hence, in Nephi's vision, although the vision is highly symbolic, the terms "the twelve" and "apostle" are most likely linked to historic time.

It may seem a bit strange that Andrew fades in the Gospel narratives, almost as if he loses his place as the second called, being known ever after merely as Peter's "brother."[3] After all, he is called with his brother Peter and therefore stands in a position of seniority.[4] But that is not how the divine economy is to work. The first called, Peter, remains in his spot as the most senior, and he may have been the oldest of the Twelve. The brothers James and John are soon elevated to places of trust next to Peter, though Andrew is possibly older than both of them. We do sense that Andrew's senior position is respected because his name appears in a post-Resurrection list ahead of the other Apostles, except Peter, James, and John (see Acts 1:13).

The manifest interest in the two pairs of brothers—Peter and Andrew, James and John—in the earliest lists underscores the family ties within the Twelve. It also hints at a solution to the question of whether James the son of Alphaeus is a brother of Levi, who in one passage is also called son of Alphaeus (Mark 2:14). Because of the configuration of the lists, highlighting brothers, it is unlikely that James and Levi are brothers because the lists would probably have drawn their names together.

Except for a few references in the other Gospels, little is known of the majority of the Apostles, either before their calls or afterward. It appears that all, or virtually all, were from Galilee, as the angel's words disclose when later addressing the eleven Apostles, "Ye men of Galilee" (Acts 1:11). We learn specifically that Peter, Andrew, and Philip came originally from the Galilean town of Bethsaida (John 1:44). Judas Iscariot may have grown up in the Judean town of Keriot in the south of the country, although this possibility remains uncertain. Such a clustering of faithful men in one geographical region implies a divine design.

At some point, these twelve men receive the Melchizedek Priesthood, whether on the occasion of their call or later. One New Testament source, the Epistle to the Hebrews, reports on Jesus's Melchizedek Priesthood but not on that of the Twelve.[5] That these men come to hold this priesthood can be assumed from the actions of Peter, James, and John when conferring the Melchizedek Priesthood on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the spring of 1829.[6]

Luke 6:17–19. The Expectant Multitude

The following is adapted from S. Kent Brown, The Testimony of Luke *(Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2015), 329–330.*

Echoes of the Exodus sound across Luke 6:17–19, beginning, of course, with the Savior's descent to the plain and then His standing upon it, just as God descends onto Sinai. His descent also recalls Moses's descent from the holy mount first with God's instructions for the Hebrews and later with the tables of the law (Exodus 19:18–20; 32:15). As the ancient Israelites were to receive the law through Moses, so the Savior's hearers are to receive a new law through Him. In the process, Jesus will establish another people of God whose resemblance to the old Israelite tribal system of twelve will be evident in the number of the Twelve Apostles.

Just as the old covenant, whose requirements are verbalized through Moses, brings unity to the tribes so that they do not break apart into squabbling clans, so the new covenant, symbolized in the cohesiveness of the Twelve, will bring unity among the Savior's followers. The terms of the covenant, for those who embrace it, Jesus will lay out in His following remarkable sermon whose centerpiece is love (Luke 6:27, 36).

Just as God demonstrates His powers to the Hebrews gathered at the base of the holy mount, so the Savior discloses divine powers to the multitude gathered at the foot of the surrounding heights by healing those afflicted with diseases and evil spirits. It is likely that no such gathering has witnessed both the

miraculous and the energizing power of God's word after the Israelites marked the stunning events at Sinai. It will be another three or four years before a similarly large group of people will witness a like set of manifestations at a temple in the New World (see 3 Nephi 11–18).

Luke 6:20–49. The Sermon on the Plain

The following is adapted from S. Kent Brown, The Testimony of Luke *(Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2015), 347–354.*

In the most emphatic spot, at the end of His sermon, the Savior turns deftly to the family, characterizing it as a house that needs a firm "foundation on a rock"—on spiritual bedrock (Luke 6:48). Although commentators have completely missed this aspect of Jesus's words, the family stands front and center in the Greek term for house, *oikia*, and the roughly equivalent Hebrew word, *bayit*. These terms carry firmly the metaphorical senses of home and household and family. Here Jesus appeals to us to secure the foundations of our families "on a rock" that lies deep in the earth, for that is the only way that our families will survive the flood and the stream that will pound against our homes in the forms of temptation and affliction.[7]

The opening verses of this section also offer figurative meanings for the terms "the poor," those who "hunger now," and those who "weep now" (Luke 6:20–21). We observe that "the poor" may be an early designation for Jesus's disciples (see the note on Luke 6:20). But the sense may go deeper and mirror that of Matthew 5:3, "the poor in spirit"—that is, the truly humble. Likewise, those who hunger now may be hungering "after righteousness," though Jesus does not specifically say this (Matthew 5:6). Similarly, those who weep now may be weeping because they sense a lack of spiritual underpinnings or, in total contrast, because they feel to rejoice.

In the opening verses of the sermon, Jesus turns the social order upside down (Luke 6:20–26). The accepted order envisions the wealthy and powerful as the truly favored. Rather, as we find in the quotation of Isaiah 40:3–5 and its implications for the arrival of the Baptist (Luke 3:4–6), the coming of John the Baptist and Jesus alters strikingly both the social and especially the religious landscape. The degradation and pain suffered by the poor and vulnerable will be reversed. Moreover, the spiritual status quo now finds a new resting place, settling far away from the halls of power and influence (see the notes on Luke 3:1–6). It effectively begins with the "word of God" coming to John "in the wilderness" (Luke 3:2). Instead of a top-down movement of spiritual blessings from temple priests and other religious leaders, Jesus will graciously share such blessings directly with the lowly, the humble, the seekers.

In a different vein, the relationship between Jesus's Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7) and His Sermon on the Plain remains a nettlesome problem that has escaped solution and may never be solved. Most commentators accept the view that the two reports are versions of the same sermon or set of teachings delivered early to disciples at a hilly spot in Galilee. Although the similarities of both content and

locale may lead us to see them as the same sermon, enough differences exist to suggest that the two are independent from one another. In fact, as I read the texts, the locales of the sermons lie about three miles apart, and this detail is most telling. Further, the strongly different character of the two discourses suggests that their current shape is not due merely to the editorial efforts of Matthew and Luke but to their sources.

The joining of the sermons, as if one and the same, rests on the apparent and, in my view, the rather flimsy assumption that Jesus typically utters something only once, not repeating Himself on different occasions and to new audiences. Such an assumption begs to be challenged. Anyone who pursues a career in teaching soon learns that repeating the same or similar material in other contexts becomes a common experience. Why should we assume something different for Jesus?

For Latter-day Saints, the integrity of the Sermon on the Mount is secure. Why? Because the Risen Jesus delivers an almost identical discourse in the New World. The striking similarities assure readers that Jesus delivers such a sermon to his Old World hearers much as Matthew records it. Naturally, this observation does not solve the question about the relationship between the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain, but it does establish the integrity of the Sermon on the Mount and pulls it out of the creative, editorial hands of Matthew, where many modern commentators seek to place it. On this view, we can begin with the Sermon on the Mount as a fixed point in Jesus's career and then ask the next question: Is the Sermon on the Plain a variant of the Sermon on the Mount, perhaps drawn from Matthew's Gospel or from a common source and then reshaped by Luke into its current form?

Topography may offer the main key for approaching an answer. According to Matthew's report, before uttering the Sermon on the Mount Jesus was traveling "about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues" (Matthew 4:23), a line that points to a broad field of activity rather than a precise locale. The words that "his fame went throughout all Syria" and, by implication, that people from there "brought unto him all sick people" (4:24) are geographically vague because in Jesus's day, Syria lies northward from Galilee and covers a huge area. Hence, Matthew's geographic notes immediately before the sermon do not help us to locate the Sermon on the Mount except to say that Jesus "went up into a mountain" to deliver it (5:1). Instead, it is Matthew's description following the sermon that offers a geographic context.

Matthew writes that Jesus comes "down from the mountain," cleanses a leper, and then enters into Capernaum (8:1–5). A reader comes away with the impression that the sermon somehow connects to the area north of Capernaum because that is where the mountain near the town rises up. To the south, of course, lies the Sea of Galilee. To the east and west of town stretches a narrow shoreline plain that features a road, along which, east of town, the customs house where Levi is employed is perched (see Luke 5:27 and the note on it). Hence, in Matthew's scheme, Jesus apparently delivers the Sermon on the Mount somewhere on the slopes north of Capernaum.

Now we must examine the topography that emerges in Luke's description of the setting of the Sermon on the Plain. We note first of all the story of the disciples picking grain on the Sabbath (Luke 6:1–5). Obviously, the area must have been level enough for farmers to plant grain, but Jesus and His followers

may have moved from such a place before, apparently on the next Sabbath, “he entered into the synagogue and taught” (6:6). Here He heals the man with the withered right hand and then withdraws “into a mountain to pray,” an important notice (6:12). From this height “he came down with them [the Twelve whom He had chosen], and stood in the plain,” a further important note (6:17). With these details in mind, we look at the topography of the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, the region where Jesus evidently delivers the Sermon on the Mount, as noted above.

There is no promising region east of Capernaum where, within two miles, a person encounters the Jordan River, which runs into the Sea of Galilee at this point. Looking in the other direction, we observe that three miles or so to the west of Capernaum lies a region that matches Luke’s description of Jesus ascending “a mountain to pray” and then descending with the Twelve to “the plain” (Luke 6:12, 17). There, beyond the northwest shore of the lake, the mountainous terrain rises sharply from a broad maritime plain, called the Valley of Ginosar or Gennesaret, and matches Luke’s remembered specifications for the setting of Jesus’s sermon recorded in Luke 6.

So far, then, the topography of the two sermons differs and, according to what remains of geographical memory, points to settings three or four miles apart. But topography is not the only point of separation. Two other elements invite a similar conclusion: the nature of the audience and the contents of the sermons. In introducing the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew writes that Jesus delivers His words in the company of “the multitudes” and “his disciples,” of whom He chooses four before that moment (Matthew 4:18–22; 5:1). Luke brings a very different audience into the picture, implying a dissimilar occasion. First, during the prior morning, Jesus chooses the Twelve, whom Luke identifies individually (Luke 6:13–16). The entire group of Twelve make up part of the assemblage. In addition, he specifies that the gathered crowd includes other “disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judæa and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon,” meaning that people come long distances from the south and north to hear Him (6:17). We are left with the sense that within a few weeks, Jesus’s reputation reaches a very large number of people, a fact that Luke stresses early on (4:14, 37; 5:15).

The contents of the two sermons, although very similar in some passages, stand apart in significant ways. Only a few dimensions draw our attention here. Unlike in Matthew, where the beatitudes stand as unified sentinels (Matthew 5:3–11), in Luke beatitudes are balanced by a series of woes and are many fewer: Luke’s four in contrast to Matthew’s eight. Moreover, according to Luke, Jesus heals a number of people “of their diseases” and “unclean spirits” just before delivering his sermon (Luke 6:17–18). Matthew reports no such event. Further, Jesus’s words in Luke do not include any of the contrasts with the old law and do not even mention the Mosaic law, whereas these elements receive strong emphasis in Matthew’s record (Matthew 5:17–45). In addition, although the two sermons feature Jesus’s commands not to judge others (Luke 6:37–42; Matthew 7:1–5), Luke’s report does not touch on almsgiving or prayer or fasting, as we find in Matthew (Matthew 6:1–18). Furthermore, although the two sermons present Jesus’s teachings about the golden rule and corrupt fruit and building a house, only in Matthew do we find

an extended treatment of what it means to say "Lord, Lord."[8] In this light, and in light of the respective settings and audiences of the sermons, it is most difficult to argue persuasively that the two accounts go back to the same event or draw on a common source.

Another point is worth making. Although a person can point to additions introduced by the Joseph Smith Translation into Luke's version of the sermon, with the effect of drawing Luke's record closer to the language of Matthew's rendition, such changes are minor and do not affect the overall character of the Sermon on the Plain. For example, the Joseph Smith Translation adds the expression "and persecute you" (Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 6:28) to Jesus's command that His followers "pray for them which despitefully use you," making the language identical to Matthew 5:44. Additionally, later in the sermon the Joseph Smith Translation adjusts Luke's expression "what thank have ye" (Luke 6:32) to "what reward have you," an almost identical wording to Matthew 5:46, a change that actually mirrors the intent of Luke's underlying Greek text (see the note on Luke 6:32). But such adjustments do not appreciably change the overall tenor of the Sermon on the Plain. And because these changes are scattered and almost random, they cannot be appealed to as evidence that the two sermons go back to a common event or source. Rather, as seen above, the topography by itself drives the point that Jesus delivers the sermons to different audiences and in different places. Moreover, the structure of the sermons diverges strikingly. In sum, it makes more sense to conclude that Jesus offers similar teachings on different occasions.

The scholar Joseph A. Fitzmyer calls the Sermon on the Plain "loose and rambling."[9] But a more patient examination shows that the Savior organizes His sermon into three broad subjects. In the first, He deals with this world and its vicissitudes through a series of beatitudes and woes (Luke 6:20–26). In the second, He unveils His command to love enemies as an imitation of what the Father does (6:27–38). In the third, He treats our treatment of others, including our building of a house because its soundness of structure affects all who reside therein, including ourselves and others (6:39–49).

In the first section, the Savior cleverly balances four statements on happiness with a contrasting set of four statements on unhappiness, clearly an aid to recalling them later. Jesus's concerns with poor and rich, weeping and laughing, point forcefully to the concept that the happiness He offers does not connect to power or status in this world. In fact, He stands as the one who offers and then guarantees the reward that "is great in heaven" (6:23). This whole section brims with overflowing abundance, though not as the world presents it.

In the second part, Jesus explores the parameters of what it means to love. In a word, it means to imitate the Father, who "is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (6:35). Blessing "them that curse" and offering the other cheek to a person who lashes out and giving "to every man that asketh" characterize the Father's generous, expansive response (6:28–30). Can we do less? Are we merely to "love them which love" us and "do good to them which do good" to us? (6:32–33). Not in the spirit of true discipleship. In fact, the observation that Jesus does not ask His followers to do what He does not do implies boldly that during the prior night, He was already praying for those from the synagogue who "were filled with madness," a

prayer that finds its full public voice at the end of His ministry: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”[10]

In the third portion, the Savior treats on one level how a person deals with others, especially from a position of pride or self-aggrandizement (6:39–49). His examples are compellingly simple and direct. He requires that all ask the following: Do I pridefully offer my help to a person needing direction when I myself am blinded, particularly by the log in my eye? Do I arrogantly equate myself with my master? In my blind state, do I see myself as a “good tree” that produces “good fruit” when, in fact, with a little introspection I would be able to see my own “corrupt” ways that taint “the treasure of [my] heart”? (6:43, 45). For the sake of impressing others, and even myself, do I profess my loyalty to the Savior by crying out, “Lord, Lord,” when disdainfully ignoring good sense and by building a house of loyalty and faith “upon the earth” whose foundation is therefore insecure and subject to the roiling currents of opposition and trials that will surely swirl around my house? (6:46, 49).

One other topic of the Sermon on the Plain stirs a comment. For the first recorded time in His preaching, the Savior draws in living plants as metaphors—“good tree . . . corrupt tree . . . thorns . . . bramble bush” (6:43–44). Later He will appeal to lilies and to living and dry grass, to sown seed and to mustard plants, to unproductive and green fig trees.[11] All such appeals, of course, derive from and are made vivid by the agrarian character of His society. But there may be more. Beneath such references one senses subtle threads that reach back to the past acts of God wherein He plants on the earth “grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit” (Genesis 1:12). All such plants are to be for the good of creatures that appear later on the earth. More importantly for Jesus’s words, the planting of plants is directly tied to God and His sacred acts of creation. The vista of divine abundance appears once again in God’s efforts to provide for the needs of His children. All of this seems to run just under the surface of Jesus’s words about trees and grasses and seeds.

Notes

1 Luke 1:27; 3:32; Acts 2:29–36; 13:33–37.

2 Luke 22:4; also John 2:13–19; 5:16; 7:30, 45; 11:57.

3 Matthew 4:18; 10:2; Mark 1:16; Luke 6:14.

4 See Matthew 4:18; Mark 1:16; also the note on Luke 5:6.

5 Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:14–22; also 2:17–3:1.

6 See Joseph Smith—History 1:72; Doctrine and Covenants 27:12–13; also 128:20.

7 Luke 6:48–49; the notes on Luke 11:14–28 and 20:17–19.

8 See, respectively, Luke 6:31, 43–44, 47–49; Matthew 7:12, 15–20, 24–27; and Luke 6:46; 13:25–30; Matthew 7:21–23.

9 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I–IX* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1982), 628.

10 Luke 6:11; 23:34; see the notes on Luke 6:12, 27–28; 22:50; 23:34.

11 Luke 8:5–8; 12:27–28; 13:6–9, 18–19; 17:6; 21:29–31.

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