

The Church of the Servant King

Survey of the Bible Series – Luke

Luke 8 SB_LK8_Some Parables

Many Women Minister to Jesus (8:1-3)

These three verses shed some light upon how Jesus and the twelve might have been supported during Jesus' public ministry. Joanna (the wife of one of Herod's stewards), Susanna, and many other women of substance (8:3) are said to have made provision (8:3). Also, this passage provides evidence that the news regarding Jesus had reached Herod's palace.

Mary, called Magdalene, was most likely not the sinful woman of 7:26-50 since she is introduced here as if it was the first time. Mary Magdalene is also distinct from Mary of Bethany in John 12:3.

The Parable of the Sower (8:4-8, 11-15)

The *Parable of the Sower* relates the parable to the preaching of the "word of the kingdom" (see Matt 13:19). The *gospel of the kingdom* in Matthew 24:14 is synonymous with "word of the kingdom" (Matt 13:19). In Matthew 24:14 – "And this *gospel of the kingdom* shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" – we see the gospel of the kingdom as the message that is preached by believers during Israel's last days, i.e. the Tribulation.

The parable of the Sower teaches principles relating to the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom. This gospel of the kingdom will be preached during the Age of Israel, both pre-Church and post-Church (i.e. Tribulation). The different types of soil represent different responses to the preaching of the kingdom gospel. For instance:

- Wayside soil - the one who doesn't understand and whose heart is hardened
- Stony soil - initial joy but no depth for the seed to take root
- Thorny soil - the effect of the Word is choked out by the details of life
- Good soil - the heart that receives the Word and becomes productive

During the period in which the "word of the kingdom" is preached, the response to the "word of the kingdom" by the "good soil" will vary:

- Matthew reports a response of a hundredfold, sixtyfold and thirtyfold (Matt 13:23).
- Mark reports a response of thirtyfold, sixtyfold and a hundredfold (Mk 4:20).
- Neither Matthew nor Mark should be understood as implying an increase or decrease in fruit production by the good soil during the course of the Age of Israel/Tribulation.
- The implication from both Matthew and Mark is that fruit production will vary among the good soil during the course of the Age of Israel.

This parable teaches that "the word of the kingdom" will be preached, but the "word of the kingdom" will be rejected by those whose hearts have been hardened, and by those who become persecuted because of the "word of the kingdom," and by those who allow the details of life to choke out the "word of the kingdom." However, there will be one group who will receive the "word of the kingdom" and there will be various levels of divine production from their lives.

The Purpose of the Parables (8:9-10)

In these verses, Jesus is simply acknowledging that the gospel of the kingdom would be understood by those who were ready to accept it even when Jesus explained kingdom concepts in parable form. However, those who were negative to that message would not understand the parables because they didn't believe the gospel of the kingdom.

The Parable of the Revealed Light (8:16-18)

Those disciples of Jesus who had heard and who were believing in Jesus would be given more instruction. However, those who rejected His teaching (i.e. Jewish religious leaders) would have their status and special position taken away from them. One scenario under which this will occur will be at the Second Advent and the consequent establishment of the Messianic kingdom.

Jesus' Mother and Brothers Come to Him (8:19-21)

The Apostle John makes it clear that Jesus' brothers (actually half brothers) did not believe in Him before His resurrection (John 7:5). Jesus is emphasizing that mere physical relationships are not the basis for true discipleship (cf. Matt 10:34-39; 12:30).

PRINCIPLE: Jesus as God represents OBJECTIVE (PURE) TRUTH that is not tainted by human bias, emotion, approbation, or any other selfish interest. While He certainly loves His mother and brothers, He objectively dissects the circumstance with the sound logic of objective spiritual truth.

Wind and Wave Obey Jesus (8:22-25)

Even though Jesus had less shelter than the beasts and birds (Matt 8:20), he still has authority over nature. The disciples believed that Jesus could do something. They had seen his miracles. However, they failed to see that the one who had been raised up by God to accomplish the messianic work could not possibly die in a storm while His work remained undone. Jesus could sleep because He knew that His work was not yet done.

A Demon Possessed Man Healed (8:26-39)

The location for this event seems to have been in the district around the town of Gadara, a town about five miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee. On the adjacent hillside are ancient tombs used for a graveyard and caves were located there. The caves provided protection from the weather and a graveyard would render the men ceremonially unclean. This was Gentile territory as indicated by the presence of the pigs. Jesus had withdrawn here not for ministry, but to get away from the crowds. However, there was no rest from Satanic opposition. Both Mark and Luke only mention one man that was demon possessed. Matthew mentions two because he had independent knowledge of a second demon possessed man.

Even though there was nothing in Jesus' command to betray His identity, the demons evidently enjoyed some independent knowledge of Jesus' identity. They also knew that there will be a time when they will be tortured and rejected forever (Jude 6; Rev 20:10). The demons statement to Jesus in verse 28 presupposes an understanding of Jesus' pre-existence on the part of the demons, i.e. "Jesus, Son of the Most High God" (cf. Matt 8:29).

There are several explanations as to why the demons desired to be sent into a herd of pigs: 1) a desire for a bodily "home"; 2) hatred of God's creatures; or 3) to stir up animosity against Jesus. The first is not likely because the first thing the demons do is cause the death of their new home. The second and third are more plausible answers.

Jesus probably granted their request because it was a way to expose the real values of the people in the vicinity. They preferred pigs to persons and swine to the Savior. Jesus' ministry was not necessarily restricted to the Jews. The Gentiles, like the Jews, also rejected Him.

A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed (8:40-56)

A ruler of the synagogue (8:41) came to Jesus to request healing for his daughter. She was 12 years of age (8:42) and the ruler's name was Jairus. In Matthew's account, she is said to have just died. In Mark and Luke's accounts, the father said she was dying. Evidently, while Jesus was speaking to Jairus, someone came from his house to tell him the girl had died. No mention is made of the faith of Jairus or his daughter; however, there is mention of the unbelief that was present in the minds of those who were at Jairus' house, i.e. "they ridiculed Him" (Lu 8:53 cf. Matt 8: 24). This may have been the factor that motivated Jesus to make the trip to Jairus' home. He knew that unbelievers would need to see this event for themselves. Such people (if they remained unbelievers after having seen this event) will be among those who prove a certain point in the greater context of the Angelic Conflict, i.e. that some will not believe even if they see with their physical eyes. Jesus' statement that she was not dead, but sleeping is designed to indicate that her death was only temporary.