

Luke 11 - The Disciples' Prayer; Persistence in Prayer; Exorcism of a Dumb Demon; Response of the Pharisees; Importance of Obeying God's Word; 6 Woes to Scribes, Pharisees

IV. The Son of Man's journey to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51—19:28)

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Luke 11

(F) Prayer (11:1-13)

(a) Lord's prayer (11:1-4) (Cf. Matt 6:5-15)

1 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, when He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John also taught his disciples."

1 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples."

1 Once Jesus was praying in a certain place. After he had finished, one of his disciples told him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."

1 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

- In the context as they had been taught by John the Baptist (Cf. Matt 6:9-15). This is an unexpected glimpse into the life of John the Baptist (a farewell look at him because this is the last we'll see him).
- John the Baptist: filled with the Spirit before birth; called to introduce the Messiah to Israel; Jesus testified that he was "greatest" of the prophets; and yet, John had to *depend* upon prayer....

Our most compelling example of prayer: Jesus. He prayed at every major crisis point in His life:

- Often prayed alone (Luke 5:16; 9:18)
- With others around (Luke 9:28-29)
- At the time of His baptism (Luke 3:21)
- When choosing His disciples (Luke 6:12)
- When the crowds increased (Luke 5:16)
- Before He asked for their confession (Luke 9:18)
- At His transfiguration (Luke 9:29)
- For Simon (Luke 22:32)
- In the garden before His betrayal (Luke 22:40-44)
- He even prayed on the Cross (Luke 23:46)

The Son of God prayed all the time. We learn about God in His Word. We gain the *fear of God* in our devotional lives. The Model Prayer that Jesus gives his disciples is not really the "Lord's Prayer"—He's teaching us how to pray (He never had to ask the Father for forgiveness!) The true Lord's Prayer is in John 17, a glimpse of the intimacy between the Son and the Father.)

2 And He said to them, **"When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come.**

2 And He said to them,"**When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come.**

2 So he told them, **"Whenever you pray you are to say, 'Father, may your name be kept holy. May your kingdom come.**

2 And he said unto them, **When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.**

- "...When you pray, say" - Jesus' introduction implied that He intended the disciples to repeat this prayer verbatim

— The introduction to the teaching that Matthew reported implied He was giving them a model or sample prayer (Matt 6:9)

- "...Father" - the only time Jesus didn't call Him Father was when he *couldn't*: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Cf. Ps 22:1)
- He couldn't because he was in *our* shoes, dying in our place. Now we're in his place, so we can now call Him "Father." Before you go to God in prayer, make sure He is really your Father.
- By using this term, the disciples would be expressing the relationship they enjoyed with God because of their relationship with Jesus (Cf. John 20:17; Rom 8:14-17; Gal 4:6)
- The closeness of their relationship with Jesus is apparent in that they could now address God as their Father, just like Jesus addressed God as His Father (Cf. 10:21)
- "...hallowed be Your name" - Hallowed = "to set apart or sanctify" or, as here, "to treat as holy." Thus the request was for God's reputation to be revered by men.
- The phrase requests "may everyone regard your name as holy" (Cf. Lev 22:32; Ps 79:9; 111:9; Is 29:23)
- God's name is essentially the sum of His attributes and His reputation among people
- "hallowed" - *hagiazō*, in the aorist passive imperative tense, which suggests a specific time of fulfillment in mind, likely connected with the coming of the kingdom
- This phrase is as much of an expression of worship as it is a petition. It asks God to act so people will regard Him as holy, to cause situations in which they will reverence and obey Him rather than blaspheming and sinning against Him.
- "...Your kingdom come" - John the Baptist, Jesus, the Twelve, and the 70 had been preaching about the coming of God's kingdom. Now Jesus says to *pray*, "Thy kingdom come."
- When Daniel read from Jeremiah that the 70 Years of Captivity were about over, he didn't lay back and wait: he *prayed* for it! (Dan 9:1-20).
- "...Thy will be done" [KJV] - prayer is God's way of enlisting *us* in what *He* wants to do. He wants to get us in a place where He can trust us with His answer.
- Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance; it is laying hold of His highest willingness.

3 'Give us each day our daily bread.

3 'Give us each day our daily bread.

3 Keep giving us every day our daily bread,

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

- "Give us each day our daily bread" - provisions for the day, one day at a time. Every good thing comes from His hand day by day.
- "Give" - in Matthew, has the aorist tense indicating a simple act of giving (Matt 6:11); here, it has the present tense suggesting a continuing daily provision. These ideas are complementary rather than contradictory.

— “each day” Matthew uses “today,” stressing present need; Luke points to the disciples’ continuing need for God’s supply.

4 ‘And **forgive us our sins**, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And **do not lead us into temptation.**’”

4 ‘And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.’”

4 and forgive us our sins, as we forgive everyone who sins against us. And never bring us into temptation.’”

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but **deliver us from [the] evil [one]**.

– “...forgive us our sins” – this concerns man’s relationship with God. Luke had already linked forgiveness with faith (Luke 7:36-50)

— In asking for forgiveness of sins, a person expresses his faith that God will forgive.

— The believer has already received eternal forgiveness for the legal guilt of his or her sins (Cf. 5:20; 7:47; Rom 5:1; 8:1; Eph 1:7). Thus, the forgiveness Jesus spoke of here is the forgiveness that is necessary for the maintenance of fellowship with the Father (Cf. 1 John 1:5-10)

— A person’s unwillingness to forgive others may indicate that they know nothing of God’s forgiveness; conversely, one’s willingness to forgive others shows that one recognizes their own need for forgiveness.

– “...do not lead us into temptation” – Jesus’ followers are to pray that they be delivered from *situations* that would cause them to sin.

— Sin usually has a preamble that could have been avoided. His disciples, contrary to the Law experts, realized that they were easily drawn into sin (Luke 10:25-29)

— This request does not imply that God entices us to sin (Cf. James 1:1-15); however, God does allow people to undergo temptation to test their faithfulness

— This request expresses the disciple’s awareness of their need for God’s help to avoid excessive temptation and enduring of all temptation. It is essentially a request for help in remaining faithful to God.

– “...deliver us from [the] evil [one]” [KJV] – don’t give Satan credit he does not need. We do have a malevolent, knowledgeable, resourceful, powerful adversary. Satan is the god of this world.

Persistence in Prayer

It is common in Luke for good lessons to be taught from bad examples (Luke 16:1-9; 18:1-8). God is not through with the subject of prayer in this chapter. Only Luke records this

next parable, and it sheds a different light upon the subject of prayer. It is a parable of contrast.

(b) Parable of the persistent friend (11:5-10)

After giving the disciples an example on how to pray, Jesus now gives them incentive to pray. In this parable, Jesus contrasts the character of God with the character of the reluctant neighbor. This parable contains a very helpful and encouraging revelation of God's character. Understanding the character of God removes many of the problems we have with prayer. It also encourages disciples to pray in spite of no immediate answers. It addresses the common feeling that prayer may be useless since God does not grant answers as we often expect Him to.

- The point of the parable **IS NOT**: Continue to pray because God will eventually respond to importunity.
- The point of the parable **IS**: Continue to pray because God responds graciously to the needs of His children.

5 And He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves,

5 Then He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves;

5 Then he told them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, let me borrow three loaves of bread.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 because a friend of mine has come to me from a journey and I have nothing to serve him';

6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him';

6 A friend of mine on a trip has dropped in on me, and I don't have anything to serve him.'

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

- The "friend" shamelessly appealed to his neighbor for some bread for a traveler. He was willing to admit he needed his neighbor's help, even though it caused him some embarrassment.

7 and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you *anything*.'

7 and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you *anything*.'

7 Suppose he answers from inside, 'Stop bothering me! The door is already locked, and my children are here with us in the bedroom. I can't get up and give you anything!'

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

- The man who came knocking was willing to suffer shame in the eyes of his neighbor, and probably the eyes of all his neighbors, once his potentially inhospitable behavior become known.

8 I tell you, even if he will not get up and give him *anything just* because he is his friend, yet because of his **shamelessness** he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

8 I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him *anything* because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

8 I tell you, even though that man doesn't want to get up and give him anything because he is his friend, he will get up and give him whatever he needs because of his persistence.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

- "...shamelessness" - *anaideia*, avoidance of shame; it refers more to "shameless boldness" more than "tenacity" or "persistence"

— The fact that the man was willing to humble himself and ask for help moved the neighbor to get up and give his friend bread.

— Friendship alone was not enough; it was the fact that the man was willing to shamelessly admit his need and ask for help, at such an inconvenient hour, that moved the neighbor to give him what he needed.

- In contrast with the man who did not want to be bothered, God wants His people to pray to Him (Luke 11:9-10). God is always looking to answer prayer.

— Jesus was contrasting, not comparing, God's attitude with the friend's attitude (v9-13). God's attitude toward His children is the opposite of the attitude of a friend toward a knocking neighbor.

— God will grant answers to prayer if we will simply ask Him for help, but we have to humble ourselves first. Often we think we can handle a situation on our own, thus do not pray. In this case, we will receive no special help from our Father.

9 "So I say to you, **ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you.

9 "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

9 So I say to you: Keep asking, and it will be given you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened for you,

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

- Jesus introduced this promise with a phrase that highlighted its reliability and gave His personal guarantee: Everyone who asks of God will receive from Him, not just the persistent (Cf. Matt 7:7-8).

- "...ask" - we must "ask" in order to receive (Cf. James 4:2)

- "...seek" - seeking God's attention and response in prayer will find it (Cf. Jer 29:12-13)

- "...knock" - those who knock on the closed door of heaven will find that He will open to them and give them what is best

— All three verbs are present tense, implying continuing action. Some have understood this to mean that Jesus was teaching His disciples to be persistent: "keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking." However, it may also be understood as meaning "don't give up asking, seeking and knocking" when answers to your prayers are not forthcoming.

— This verse is in contrast to the previous parable, implying that we should "ask...seek...knock" not only in the midnight emergencies, but we should regularly keep in constant communication with the Father, presenting our moment-by-moment requests to God.

10 For **everyone** who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened.

10 For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.

10 because everyone who keeps asking will receive, and the person who keeps searching will find, and the person who keeps knocking will have the door opened.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

- This verse gives the justification for the promise of v9; it sets forth the absolute certainty of what Jesus just said.

— God will definitely respond to the prayers of His children. It's difficult to imagine a stronger promise.

- "...everyone" - in context, refers to His children (v10,13)

— Because God will rise up and act on behalf of those in need, we should bring our requests to Him.

The response of many Christians to this promise is: I asked, but did not receive; I sought God, but did not feel I got through to Him; I knocked at His door, but He did not admit me. However, the unusual strength with which Jesus gave this promise should encourage us to

believe in Him in spite of appearances. We may not have received yet. We may not feel that we got through to God, but Jesus said we did. We may feel that we are knocking on heavens of brass, but Jesus promised that God entertained our prayer.

(c) Parable of a good father (11:11-13)

11 Now which one of you fathers will his son ask for a fish, and instead of a fish, he will give him a snake?

11 Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he?

11 What father among you, if his son asks for bread, would give him a stone, or if he asks for a fish, would give him a snake instead of the fish?

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?*

- Since God is our heavenly Father, He will certainly do no less than a normal earthly father would do

12 Or he will even ask for an egg, *and his father* will give him a scorpion?

12 Or *if* he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he?

12 Or if he asks for an egg, would he give him a scorpion?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

- God will respond to our prayers kindly, not cruelly; lovingly, not with deception or danger

13 So if you, *despite* being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

13 So if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who keep asking him!"

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

- Since God is God, He will do much more than a sinful earthly father would do

- When Jesus said this, the Holy Spirit did not yet indwell every believer

— The greatest blessing God could give a believer then was the possession of His Spirit

— Jesus is saying that the heavenly Father would give the very best gifts to those who ask Him

— Believers today do not have to ask God to give them the Holy Spirit because He did this when they trusted in His Son (Rom 8:9)

- The fact that God gives only good gifts to His children explains why He does not give us everything we request, even things that look good to us.
- Therefore, we need to understand Jesus' promise—that God will give us what we ask (v9-10)—as referring only to things that are good for us.
- God will give, without fail, what is best to His children who request of Him in prayer.

The Major Rejection

Luke records the climax of the rejection of Jesus and His message, then narrated Jesus' instructions to His disciples about how they should live in view of that rejection. Most scholars believe this event is a similar, but different, event than is recorded in Matt 12:22-30 and Mark 3:20-27.

(G) Religious leaders reject Christ (11:14-36)

(a) Attributing Christ's miracles to Satan (11:14-16)

Messianic Miracle #2: Casting Out a Dumb Demon (Cf. Matt 12:22-37; Mark 3:20-30)

14 And He was casting out a mute demon; when the demon had gone out, the man who was *previously* unable to speak talked, and the crowds were **amazed**.

14 And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute; when the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed.

14 Jesus was driving a demon out of a man who was unable to talk. When the demon had gone out, the man began to speak, and the crowds were amazed.

14 And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

- Two other instances of Jesus casting out a "dumb demon" are recorded: Matt 17:14-20; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43; and, Jesus' second "Messianic Miracle" in Matt 12:22-37; Mark 3:20-30.

- "...amazed" - this sign of His messiahship amazed the multitudes who saw it (Cf. 4:36; 9:42-43; et al)

Demons in Luke

In Luke the terms "demon" and "demons" occur 16x and "evil spirit(s)" occurs 8x; Jesus always had authority over the demons—it was a sign of His Messianic power (Luke 7:21; 13:32).

The demons themselves recognized that authority (Luke 4:31-41; 8:28-31), as did Jesus' enemies (Luke 11:14-26). Jesus gave others power over demons (Luke 9:1) and His authority over demons amazed the crowds (Luke 4:36; 9:42-43).

This incident is unique and had a major impact. According to the Jewish procedure, the priests would command the demon to identify himself. If the demon had struck the person

dumb, he could not identify himself, which eluded the priest's ability to cast him out. Casting out a demon that was dumb was, apparently, a Messianic sign (see note: **Messianic Miracles** and associated notes in Matt 12).

15 But some of them said, "He casts out the demons by **Beelzebul**, the ruler of the demons."

15 But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons."

15 But some of them said, "He drives out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons."

15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

- "...Beelzebub" - this was the name given to *the prince of demons*—Satan (v18). It originally meant "Lord of the Princes," but had been corrupted by a pun into "Lord of the Flies" (2 Kings 1:1-3).

— The Jews regarded him as the personification of all that was evil and satanic (Cf. Matt 10:25)

— It was one of the names for the Philistine god Baal ("Beelzebul" means "Lord of the Dwelling" (Mark 3:22) and ties in with Christ's subsequent illustrations)

— The charge was that Jesus was possessed by Satan himself

16 Others, to test *Him*, were demanding of Him a sign from heaven.

16 Others, to test *Him*, were demanding of Him a sign from heaven.

16 Others, wanting to test Jesus, kept asking him for a sign from heaven.

16 And others, tempting *him*, sought of him a sign from heaven.

- Others demanded an even more powerful sign than demon exorcism to validate His messianic claim. This unwarranted request constituted a test or provocation of Jesus. (Jesus responded beginning in v29)

— Luke previously distinguished between the attitudes of the scribes and Pharisees and the crowds (7:29-30). Now, the opposition to Jesus characteristic of the former is emerging in the latter.

(b) Christ's rebuttal (11:17-32)

17 But He knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and a house *divided* against itself falls.

17 But He knew their thoughts and said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and a house *divided* against itself falls.

17 Since he knew what they were thinking, he told them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is devastated, and a divided household collapses.

17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against a house falleth.

- Jesus gave two rebuttals: **First**, it was illogical—it would be ridiculous for Satan to drive out his own demons, for then he would be weakening his own position and kingdom.
- The head of an army would hardly work with his enemy against his own troops

18 And if Satan also has been divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you claim that I cast out the demons by Beelzebul.

18 If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul.

18 Now, if Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom last? After all, you say that I drive out demons by Beelzebul.

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

- An authentication by Jesus himself that Satan is a real personage with a kingdom that is strong and united (Cf. Eph 2:1-3; 6:10ff).

19 Yet if by Beelzebul I cast out the demons, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore, they will be your judges.

19 And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? So they will be your judges.

19 If I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own followers drive them out? That is why they will be your judges!

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges.

- **Second**, Jesus argued that if Satan was behind Jesus' exorcisms, it was logical to assume that he was also behind the exorcisms that some recognized Jewish exorcists performed. Jewish exorcists were effective (Cf. Acts 19:13-14); they received their power from God as Jesus did.

— Jesus pointed out the self-incriminating double standard of those who were accusing Him. If their followers drove out demons, they claimed it was done by the power of God.

— Jesus critics would have been unwilling to concede that Satan was behind these Jewish exorcisms.

20 But if I cast out the demons by the **finger of God**, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

20 But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

20 But if I drive out demons by the power of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

- "...finger of God" - harkens back to Moses' miracles in Pharaoh's court (Ex 8:19). There, the Egyptians confessed that the finger ("active power") of God was at work when they could no longer reproduce Moses' miracles.

— Jesus claimed the same divine source of power for His miracles

— His miracles indicated the coming of the Messiah and the approach of His kingdom

To those who believe the use of these verses support a current, spiritual form of the kingdom today:

First, it is appropriate to dispute common rendering that says, "the kingdom of God is come upon you." This rendering is not correct since in context Christ was addressing the Pharisees. How could the kingdom be within the satanically-empowered Pharisees (John 8:44)? These were the very individuals plotting to murder Christ at the very time that these words were uttered.

Furthermore, Scripture always portrays *people entering the kingdom* (Matt 5:20; 23:13; John 3:5) rather than the *kingdom entering people*. Does Christ perfectly reign in the hearts of the believer today? If so, why are there consistent commands given in the NT epistles against grieving (Eph 4:30) and quenching the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 5:19)? The mere existence of these prohibitions implies that believers today have the capacity to commit these sins and consequently inhibit the reigning influence of Christ in their hearts. In addition, this frequent rendering converts the kingdom into a spiritual reality only. However, a terrestrial, geo-political element is always included in the OT's presentation of the kingdom. Such an abrupt change from understanding the kingdom as encompassing this physical reality to solely a spiritual reality is tantamount to hermeneutically changing horses in midstream. Why would Christ, or any of the NT writers for that matter, introduce such a radical transition without any in-depth commentary explaining that such a transition was underway.

Also, if Luke 17:20-21 evidences the fact that Jesus set up a present, spiritual form of the kingdom during His First Advent, then why is His earthly ministry subsequent to these verses characterized by perpetual promises of a future, earthly kingdom? For example, in Matt 19:28, Christ promised His disciples, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

In Matt 26:29, He similarly told His disciples, "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." Even Christ's closest companions understood His teaching as conveying a future, earthly kingdom. Not only did the disciples believe that Christ was going to restore the kingdom to

Israel (Acts 1:6), but the mother of James and John also requested that her sons be given places of prominence with the earthly kingdom's establishment (Matt 20:20-21). Because the request in Matt 20 and the inquiry of Acts 1 both transpired late in Christ's ministry, it is unlikely that the disciples had a mistaken understanding of the kingdom at this point. Also, the penitent thief on the cross obviously saw the kingdom as a future reality when he exclaimed, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" (Luke 23:42). Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy disciple of Christ in whose tomb Christ was eventually buried, also understood Christ as teaching a future kingdom. Mark 15:43 says, "Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who *himself was waiting for the kingdom of God*; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus" (italics added).

Second, "kingdom now" theologians rely upon the present tense expression "is in your midst" (Luke 17:21) to argue for a present form of the Messianic kingdom. However to the Jewish mind king and kingdom went together like horse and carriage. It was unfathomable for them to have a king without the presence of the kingdom. Note the following passages that link king and kingdom:

Is 9:6-7: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this."

Dan 7:13-14: "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."

Luke 1:26-27,32: "In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary...He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David."

E.R. Craven further explains this king and kingdom connection to the Jewish mind: Now, remembering the close connection in the Jewish mind between the establishment of the *Basileia*, and the glorious coming of the Son of Man—a connection established by the prophecy of Daniel (7:13-14), and not previously rebuked but approved by Jesus (Luke 9:26-27)—let anyone hypothesize as the meaning of...*with the signs of a gradual approach*, and of...*in the midst of*, and read the entire passage, v20-30.

All of this to say, that the kingdom was very much in the midst of the nation (Luke 17:21) much at Christ's First Advent since the king was present.

However, the offer of the kingdom framework, which has been discussed in prior articles, [4] is sufficient for handling these verses in the same way it is capable of handling Matt 12:28. Christ's presence manifested kingdom realities that could also have become tangible for the nation had they fulfilled their obligation of enthroning their king (Deut 17:15). In other words, the presence of the kingdom in Christ could not become a reality for all because of the nation's rejection of the kingdom offer. Grammarian Max Zerwick notes how this interpretation represents an acceptable rendering of the present tense expression "is in your midst": In view of the fact that Christ was addressing the Pharisees, modern exegetes generally prefer to translate "among" but this meaning is elsewhere unknown.

Christ's presence manifested kingdom realities that could also have become tangible for the nation had they fulfilled their obligation of enthroning their king (Deut 17:15). In other words, the presence of the kingdom in Christ could not become a reality for all because of the nation's rejection of the kingdom offer.

Despite the fact that the consensus of NT scholarship accepts that Jesus believed that the kingdom of God had already in some sense arrived in Jesus' words and deeds, the fact has to be faced that the evidence in support of such an assumption is not very substantial.

[Vlach]

Other passages "Kingdom Now" or Progressive Dispensationalists use to support the coming of the kingdom in spiritual form include: Matt 12:28; Luke 11:20; 17:20-21. See [The Coming Kingdom \(brief\)](#) for a complete list of passages along with a refutation of this doctrine. See also [Offer of the Kingdom](#), along with notes on the passages above.

21 When a **strong man**, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are secure.

21 When a strong *man*, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed.

21 "When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own mansion, his property is safe.

21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

- "...strong *man*" - Satan

22 But when *someone stronger than he* attacks him and overpowers him, *that man* takes away his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder.

22 But when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder.

22 But when a stronger man than he attacks and defeats him, the stronger man strips off that man's armor in which he trusted and then divides his plunder.

22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

- "...stronger than he" - Jesus

— Satan had amassed much booty in term of human captives, and had kept these people imprisoned. Jesus came, attacked Satan (the exorcisms), and had "overcome" him. Jesus removed Satan's defenses (his "demons"), and set free those whom he had taken captive.

23 The one who is not with Me is against Me; and the one who does not gather with Me scatters.

23 He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters.

23 "The person who isn't with me is against me, and the person who doesn't gather with me scatters."

23 He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

- It is impossible to find neutral ground in this cosmic war (Cf. Luke 9:50). If you're not with Jesus, you're against Him.

- In the second part of the verse, Jesus makes the same point again, but using the figures of reaping and herding.

— Laborers among God's flock who do not "gather" people "scatter" them.

The Response of the Pharisees; Demand a Sign (Cf. Matt 12:38-45)

24 "When the unclean spirit comes out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding *any*, it then says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'

24 "When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'

24 "Whenever an unclean spirit goes out of a person, it wanders through dry places looking for a place to rest but doesn't find any. So it says, 'I will go back to my home that I left.'

24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

- This is a warning against casting out demons, which some of Jesus' critics were evidently doing, without replacing them with something stronger in a person's life, namely the life of Christ.

25 And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order.

25 And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order.

25 When it gets back home, it finds it swept clean and put in order.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth *it* swept and garnished.

26 Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they come in and live there; and the last *condition* of that person becomes worse than the first."

26 Then it goes and takes *along* seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first."

26 Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they all go in and settle there. And so the final condition of that person is worse than the first."

26 Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.

- A formerly demon possessed person who did not believe on Jesus was in greater danger after his exorcism than he was before it. The expelled demon could return to inhabit their spiritually empty spirit with additional demons.

— Not only was it bad to oppose Jesus and attribute His works to Satan, but it was worse to exercise God's expulsive power on demons without also preaching the gospel to people.

27 While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that carried You, and the breasts at which You nursed!"

27 While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed."

27 As Jesus was saying this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and told him, "How blessed is the womb that gave birth to you and the breasts that nursed you!"

27 And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

- A woman yelled from the crowd how wonderful it must have been for Mary to have given birth to such a son as Jesus.

— Jesus' response (v28) did not reflect unfavorably on Mary, nor did it bestow special status on her

— Mary's privilege as the mother of the Messiah was great indeed (Cf. 1:45), however those who heard God's word of salvation through Jesus and His disciples, believed it, and acted on it, had an even greater position.

28 But He said, "*On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and follow it.*"

28 But He said, "*On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.*"

28 But he said, "*Instead, how blessed are those who hear God's word and obey it!*"

28 But he said, *Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.*

- This teaching is similar to that in Luke 8:19-21: family relationships are not the most important things in life
- A woman cried out that it must have been wonderful to have been Jesus' mother. The nation took pride in the fact that they descended from Abraham (John 8:33-39).
- Jesus pointed out that a physical relationship was unimportant compared with hearing and obeying the Word of God
- As Luke continues to emphasize, the Gospel is not limited to Israel; it's for all who trust in Christ

The Response of the Pharisees; Demand a Sign (Cf. Matt 12:38-45)

29 Now as the crowds were increasing, He began to say, "This generation is a wicked generation; it demands a **sign**, and so no sign will be given to it except the sign of **Jonah**."

29 As the crowds were increasing, He began to say, "This generation is a wicked generation; it seeks for a sign, and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah."

29 Now as the crowds continued to throng around Jesus, he went on to say, "This people living today are an evil generation. It craves a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah,"

29 And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonah the prophet."

- This teaching responded to the request for a "sign" from Jesus' critics (v16; Cf. Matt 16:1-4)

- "...sign" - a confirming miracle, which showed that the spoken message was true

- "...Jonah" - Jonah himself was the sign of impending judgment to the Ninevites

- His supernatural appearance and preaching triggered widespread repentance. Likewise, the supernatural appearance and preaching of Jesus, and the repentance that accompanied it, signified impending judgment.

- The difference was that the positive response to Jonah, by Gentiles no less, postponed God's judgment. The negative response to Jesus' ministry did nothing to postpone God's judgment on Israel.

- The judgment on Israel included the postponement of the kingdom, the *diaspora*, and the destruction of Jerusalem

30 For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation.

30 For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation.

30 because just as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so the Son of Man will be a sign to this generation.

30 For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

- This sign has been interpreted in at least two ways:

(1) Many say it was the physical appearance of Jonah; perhaps his skin was bleached white by the sea monster's inner juices.

(2) The real "sign of Jonah" was his death, burial, and resurrection. Some people believe that Jonah actually died and was brought back to life.

— The people of Nineveh believed what Jonah preached, even if they had no physical evidence. The people of Israel did not believe, even though they had many miraculous signs.

— This "sign of Jonah" is what Peter preached at Pentecost Acts 2:22ff; and the early church centered on Christ's resurrection (Acts 1:22; 3:15; 5:30-32; 13:32-33)

31 The Queen of the South will rise up with the men of this generation at the judgment and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, *something* greater than Solomon is here.

31 The Queen of the South will rise up with the men of this generation at the judgment and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

31 The queen of the south will stand up at the judgment and condemn the people living today, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. But look, something greater than Solomon is here!

31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

- The Queen of Sheba traveled a great distance to visit Solomon (1 Kings 10:1-13) and hear his wisdom, yet the "men of this generation" paid little attention to Jesus' wisdom.

— This was true even though the Son of Man was "greater than Solomon"

— She acted simply on what she heard, without any external confirmation (signs)

32 The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, *something* greater than Jonah is here.

32 The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

32 The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment and condemn the people living today, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah. But look, something greater than Jonah is here!"

32 The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

- These were both *Gentile* examples—the men of Nineveh and the Queen of Sheba were from Gentile countries.

— Both responded to spoken messages without any authenticating signs

(c) Parable of the lamp (11:33-36)

33 "No one lights a lamp and puts *it away* in a cellar nor under a basket, but on the lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light.

33 "No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it away in a cellar nor under a basket, but on the lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light.

33 "No one lights a lamp and puts it in a hiding place or under a basket, but on a lamp stand, so that those who enter may see its light.

33 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth *it* in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

- This mini-parable must have been used regularly by Jesus. In Matthew's account, He used it to encourage His disciples to bear witness publicly (Cf. Luke 8:16). Here, He used it to illustrate His own role as someone who dispels darkness.

34 Your eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness.

34 The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness.

34 Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light. But when it's evil, your body is full of darkness.

34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine* eye is evil, thy body also *is* full of darkness.

- Jesus also used this parable in the Sermon on the Mount

— He compared the eye to a lamp in both Matthew and here, but not in the sense of being sources of light, but rather as vehicles through which illumination comes.

— In Matthew, He taught that a person's attitude can affect his ability to "see" (comprehend spiritual truth)

— Here, the emphasis is on the "light," and the point is the importance of admitting the "light" (the gospel message) by accepting Jesus' teaching.

- Failure to receive Jesus' teaching results in spiritual blindness
- The clear or healthy eye has the ability to comprehend truth as it is; to "see" clearly. The bad eye represents the inability to comprehend truth.
- Their problem was their perception, not a lack of light. They did not need a sign, they needed hearts to believe the great display of God's power they had already seen.

35 So watch out that the light in you is not darkness.

35 Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness.

35 Therefore, be careful that the light in you isn't darkness.

35 Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

- If a person rejects Jesus' light (truth) for another so-called "light," they will discover that the other light brings no true illumination, but "darkness."

— Our eyes respond to light by admitting it, and the result is illumination and the ability to "see"; this is how Jesus wanted His hearer to respond to His teaching, because the result would be spiritual illumination.

- Three men in the Bible illustrate this truth: they began in the light and ended up in darkness—they were double-minded:

(1) Samson ended up as a blind slave in a dark dungeon because he yielded to the "lust of the flesh" (Judges 16).

(2) Lot began as a pilgrim with his uncle Abraham, but ended as a drunk in a cave committing incest.

(3) King Saul began as a humble leader but pride led him into a witch's cave (1 Sam 28) and suicide on the field of battle (1 Sam 31).

36 Therefore if your **whole body** is full of light, without any dark part, it will be wholly illuminated, as when the lamp illuminates you with its light."

36 If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it, it will be wholly illumined, as when the lamp illumines you with its rays."

36 Now if your whole body is full of light, with no part of it in darkness, it will be as full of light as when a lamp gives you light with its rays."

36 If thy whole body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

- "...whole body" - the inner person or personality. The person who believes all of Jesus' teaching will experience "full" illumination.

— We live in a culture that denies any distinctive between light and dark, right from wrong.

The quest of Western Civilization is Truth. Yet today's culture denies the existence of Truth.

— Jesus often taught His disciples through parables. Because they had been listening to Him they had light shining on them. Thus, they should share that light (v33).

— The shortcut to Truth is to go to the fountain of Truth, Jesus Christ. Who could declare by his life as well as by words: "I am the Way the Truth the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

(H) Christ rejects the religious leaders (11:37-54)

(a) Woes to the Pharisees (11:37-44)

37 Now when He had spoken, a Pharisee *asked Him to have lunch with him; and He went in and reclined *at the table*.

37 Now when He had spoken, a Pharisee *asked Him to have lunch with him; and He went in, and reclined *at the table*.

37 After Jesus had said this, a Pharisee invited him to have a meal with him. So Jesus went and took his place at the table.

37 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

- This is the second of three reported occasions where Jesus is invited to dine at a Pharisee's house (7:36-50; 14:1-24). Each time is an occasion of conflict.

38 When the Pharisee saw *this*, he was surprised that *Jesus* had not first ceremonially washed before the meal.

38 When the Pharisee saw it, he was surprised that He had not first ceremonially washed before the meal.

38 The Pharisee was surprised to see that he didn't first wash before the meal.

38 And when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

- Jesus offended His host by not washing ritually before eating

— Luke omitted an explanation of the Jewish custom (Cf. Matt 15:1-9; Mark 7:1-4)

— The Mosaic Law did not demand this washing, but it had become customary; the Pharisees viewed it as a safeguard against defilement.

39 But the Lord said to him, "**Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the dish; but your inside is full of greed and wickedness.**

39 But the Lord said to him, "**Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but inside of you, you are full of robbery and wickedness.**

39 But the Lord told him, "**Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but on the inside you are full of greed and evil.**

39 And the Lord said unto him, **Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.**

- Jesus did not criticize the Pharisee or his religious brothers for washing their hands before eating, or for observing ritual purification beyond what the law required. He used

the Pharisee's objection to point out the hypocrisy involved in Pharisaic teaching and practice.

— Those present would've taken Jesus' action as a breach of courtesy. Evidently, Jesus was willing to do this to provide an occasion to issue these warnings to the Pharisees.

— The Pharisees often neglected more important things while stressing less important things (Cf. 6:27-36; 10:25-37).

— By ceremonially washing, they were only doing half of what God expected of them. They needed to purify themselves internally as well as externally.

— To wash the outside of a person but not cleanse the inside is as foolish as only washing the outside of a cup or platter without washing the inside.

40 You foolish ones, did He who made the outside not make the inside also?

40 You foolish ones, did not He who made the outside make the inside also?

40 You fools! The one who made the outside made the inside, too, didn't he?

40 Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also?

- Did not the same God create who created the outside of a person, create the inside also? Therefore, you must cleanse both.

41 But give that which is within as a charitable gift, and then all things are clean for you.

41 But give that which is within as charity, and then all things are clean for you.

41 So give what is inside to the poor, and then everything will be clean for you.

41 But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

- One way to demonstrate that they were clean on the inside would be their willingness to give material things to the poor.

— Not that the alms would accomplish it, but the alms gives evidence to their faith.

Jews and Dead Things

As a Jew, if you touched a dead thing that would make you ceremonially defiled, and so you couldn't observe Passover, etc. They whitewashed tombs near holy days so that people would not accidentally stumble on the tomb and then be defiled and unable to celebrate the festivities. To call a Jew a "whitewashed tomb" was the strongest language to use against a formal Jew.

42 "But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithes of **mint, rue**, and every *kind of* garden herb, and yet you ignore justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

42 "But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue and every *kind of* garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should

have done without neglecting the others.

42 "How terrible it will be for you Pharisees! You give a tenth of your mint, spices, and every kind of herb, but you neglect justice and the love of God. These are the things you should have practiced, without neglecting the others.

42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

- It's an accusation of hypocrisy—focusing on externals and avoiding internals (Luke 12:1).

- "...mint, rue" - the Pharisees typically tithed, even their garden herbs; Jesus provided two examples (Cf. Lev 27:30-33; Deut 14:22-29; 26:12-15)

- Jesus had no issue with this, but He did take issue with the fact that they neglected giving two more important things to God, mainly "justice" and "love"

43 Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the seat of honor in the synagogues and personal greetings in the marketplaces.

43 Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the chief seats in the synagogues and the respectful greetings in the market places.

43 How terrible it will be for you Pharisees! You love to have the places of honor in the synagogues and to be greeted in the marketplaces.

43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

- Jesus is criticizing the Pharisee's love for the front seats in the synagogues, indicating their love of position and glory

- "Greetings" in public places pandered to the Pharisee's pride as well

44 Woe to you! For you are like unseen tombs, and the people who walk over *them* are unaware of it."

44 Woe to you! For you are like concealed tombs, and the people who walk over *them* are unaware of it."

44 How terrible it will be for you! You are like unmarked graves—people walk on them without realizing it."

44 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware of *them*.

- The Pharisees avoided touching graves to avoid ritual defilement. However, they themselves defiled other people who contacted them, as hidden graves defiled those who unknowingly walked over them.

- The Jews usually whitewashed these graves to warn people to keep from accidentally touching them

- While trying to remain ritually pure, they were spiritually defiling many other people who were unaware of the Pharisees' evil influence on them.
- The sins of the Pharisees contaminated the entire nation.

(b) Woes to the lawyers (11:45-54)

45 One of the **lawyers** *said to Him in reply, "Teacher, when You say these things, You insult us too."

45 One of the lawyers *said to Him in reply, "Teacher, when You say this, You insult us too."

45 Then one of the experts in the Law told him, "Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us, too."

45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.

- "...lawyers" - scribes; most scribes were Pharisees as well

- The lawyer who spoke wanted to distinguish his group as less guilty than the Pharisees

46 But He said, "**Woe to you lawyers as well! For you load people with burdens that are hard to bear, while you yourselves will not even touch the burdens with one of your fingers.**"

46 But He said, "**Woe to you lawyers as well! For you weigh men down with burdens hard to bear, while you yourselves will not even touch the burdens with one of your fingers.**"

46 Jesus said, "**How terrible it will be for you experts in the Law, too! You load people with burdens that are hard to carry, yet you don't even lift a finger to ease those burdens.**"

46 And he said, **Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.**

- Jesus refused to give in to the lawyer's premise; the scribes were just as hypocritical as the Pharisees

- The scribes involved themselves more in the interpretation of the law; the Pharisees generally advocated and enforced those interpretations. The scribes were a professional class; the Pharisees were a religious party.

— By interpreting the Jewish traditions strictly, they scribes placed heavy moral burdens on the Jews. However, they cleverly found ways of escaping their own responsibility to keep the Law, while giving the impression that they were obedient.

— This reflected a lack of love and compassion on the rest of the Jews, who had to labor under their demands

47 **Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and *it was your fathers who* killed them.**

47 Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and *it was your fathers who* killed them.

47 How terrible it will be for you! You build monuments for the prophets, and it was your ancestors who killed them!

47 Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

- It was not morally wrong for the scribes to build new tombs to replace the older tombs of Israel's prophets. However, Jesus saw this as ironic testimony to their opposition to God's recent prophets, specifically John the Baptist and Himself

— By building these "tombs," the scribes appeared to be honoring the prophets, but they were also walling them in and sealing them off from the people.

— They effectually did this when they turned the people away from the prophets whom God had recently sent to Israel (John the Baptist & Jesus). In this way, they were following in the footsteps of their ancestors who "killed" the prophets.

48 So you are witnesses and you approve of the deeds of your fathers; because *it was they who* killed them, and you build *their tombs*.

48 So you are witnesses and approve the deeds of your fathers; because it was they who killed them, and you build *their tombs*.

48 So you are witnesses and approve of the deeds of your ancestors, because they killed those for whom you are building monuments.

48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

- They built tombs for the prophets, thus identifying with their forefathers who killed the prophets. Outwardly they seemed to honor the prophets, but God knew that inwardly they were rejecting the prophets.

— The attitude of the scribes to the prophets professed a lip service and a deep admiration. However, the only prophets they admired were dead prophets; when they met a living one, they tried to kill him.

49 For this reason also, the **wisdom of God** said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some of them they will kill, and some they will persecute,*

49 For this reason also the wisdom of God said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles, and *some of them they will kill and some they will persecute,*

49 That is why the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles. They will kill some of them and persecute others;'

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some of them they shall slay and persecute:*

- "...wisdom of God" - sometimes used as a title for Jesus (Cf. 1 Cor 1:24,30; Col 2:3)

- However, it seems unusual for Jesus to refer to Himself in this way
- Probably means “God, in His wisdom” making God the source of the words that follow
- The words that follow in v49-51 are not a quotation from the OT, but rather they embody the essence of OT revelation about the fates of the prophets and those who oppose them.
- The content of this revelation was that God’s people would typically reject the prophets and messengers (Cf. 9:1-6; 10:1-16).

50 so that the blood of all the prophets, shed since the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation,

50 so that the blood of all the prophets, shed since the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation,

50 so those living today will be charged with the blood of all the prophets that was shed since the foundation of the world,

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

51 from the blood of **Abel** to the blood of **Zechariah**, who was killed between the altar and the house of God; yes, I tell you, **it shall be charged against this generation.'**

51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the house of God; yes, I tell you, it shall be charged against this generation.'

51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who died between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be charged against this generation!

51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

- “...Abel” - the first innocent victim (Gen 4:8). He was killed because he was giving an offering of faith. A lamb, a sacrificial lamb pointing to the Cross.

- “...Zechariah” - the priest (not the writing prophet, Cf. Matt 23:35); the last martyr in the OT (2 Chr 24:20-21).

— There were probably other victims since Zechariah, but his murder was the last one in OT history. Remember, Chronicles was last in the Hebrew Bible.

- “...it shall be charged against this generation” - the result of the Jews treatment of the prophets throughout OT history would be that God would hold the present “generation” of rejecters responsible.

— The last rejection, of God’s own Son, would be the proverbial “straw that broke the camel’s back.” That would prove to be the rejection that would add the last measure of guilt that would result in God pouring out His wrath (destruction of Jerusalem, Israel’s scattering; the Holocaust) for all the unjustified murders throughout history.

52 Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the **key of knowledge**; you yourselves did not enter, and you hindered those who were entering."

52 Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you yourselves did not enter, and you hindered those who were entering."

52 How terrible it will be for you experts in the Law! You have taken away the key to knowledge. You didn't go in yourselves, and you kept out those who were trying to go in."

52 Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

- "...key of knowledge" - probably a reference to Jesus' teachings

- The scribes professed to have the key to understanding the OT, and the people viewed them as experts. However, they rejected Jesus' teachings, and therefore "entered not" into the knowledge that acceptance of His teachings would have opened to them.

- In addition, they opposed Jesus, and thereby discouraged the people "that were entering" into that knowledge.

- This last woe was the most serious offense of the religious leaders.

The Hostility of the Pharisees and Lawyers

53 When He left that place, the scribes and the Pharisees began to be very hostile and to interrogate Him about many *subjects*,

53 When He left there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to be very hostile and to question Him closely on many subjects,

53 As Jesus was leaving, the scribes and the Pharisees began to oppose him fiercely, interrogating him about many things.

53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:

- Jesus' criticism and condemnation fanned the flames of Pharisaic hostility into an inferno of hatred.

54 plotting against Him to catch Him in something He might say.

54 plotting against Him to catch *Him* in something He might say.

54 They watched him closely in an effort to trap him in something he might say.

54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

- Jesus had challenged their expertise; now they sought to defend themselves by discrediting Him. They were plotting and seeking to trip Him up and trap Him.