

Two Year Bible Trek

Week 84

Luke 20 - 28

Key Concepts: The key concept in this book is that Jesus the Christ is the completion of God's work with Israel and also the beginning of God's work with the Gentile world.

Central Concepts: The third central concept in Luke has to do with Luke's care for the poor and marginalized. We see this in several places. First Luke references the poor directly. In the Lucan beatitudes Jesus speaks of "Blessed are the poor" rather than "Blessed are the poor in Spirit" as in Matthew. . Jesus himself, as he begins his ministry states that he is proclaiming good news to the economically poor as well as the coming of the year of Jubilee in which all debts are canceled. Second we have less obvious references such as in the Magnificat, Mary's song, where Mary speaks of God having brought down the mighty and lifted the lowly or when Jesus tells his disciples that when they give a feast they should invite the "poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind."

Brief Summary: The first section of Luke took us from Jesus' infancy to his ministry in Galilee. The second section focused on Jesus' journey to and entry into Jerusalem. This section takes us from his teaching in the Temple to his resurrection. The tension in this final portion of Luke becomes immediately apparent when Jesus is confronted by the religious leaders who demand to know by whose authority he is teaching. Jesus replies with his own question to them about John the Baptist. They refuse to answer and so does Jesus. Though the leadership wishes to arrest him immediately, they do not do so because the crowd is on his side. We then witness the leaders attempting to trap Jesus into a position that will either turn the crowd or the government against him. Jesus however eludes their traps.

At this point, Jesus offers his apocalyptic vision for the coming doom of the Temple and the return of the Son of Man. This comes with a warning that the people need to pay attention because it is too easy to be concerned with day to day life and miss the signs of what God is doing. Jesus' popularity continues to grow and people come to listen to him teach in the Temple.

Luke now shifts to the upper room, the Last Supper and the betrayal. We are told that Satan entered Judas and caused him to conspire with the religious leaders to hand Jesus over to them. This sets the scene for Jesus' words concerning his coming suffering. He knows that Judas has betrayed him yet makes it clear that this is God's plan. The disciples, being completely oblivious to Jesus' discussion of sacrifice, argue about who is the greatest and Jesus reminds them that the servant is above all. The meal concludes with Jesus telling Peter that Peter will deny Jesus and Jesus insuring his followers are armed.

Jesus and the disciples then go to the Mount of Olives where Jesus is arrested and taken to the priest's house, where Peter denies knowing him. Jesus is presented to Caiaphas, then to Pilate, next to Herod and then is sent back to Pilate. Pilate wants to release him but the crowd cries out that they want Jesus crucified. Pilate then sentences Jesus to death. On his way to the cross Simon of Cyrene helps to carry the cross. Jesus is crucified between two criminals and after he dies his body is given to Joseph of Arimathea who was a member of the Jewish Council but did not consent to Jesus' death.

Luke has three resurrection accounts. The first is to the women who are told of Jesus' resurrection by the angels. The second is to two disciples on the way to Emmaus. The third is to all of the disciples as they were gathered in Jerusalem. Luke concludes his gospel by having the disciples watch as Jesus ascends to heaven.

1. What do you think of Jesus' chastisement of the Pharisees?
2. What do you think about Jesus asking the disciples to take swords with them?
3. What stands out for you in the crucifixion and resurrection stories in Luke?