

Luke 7.1-35

Is that You, God?!

Disappointed w/ God > He LET YOU DOWN > Not Fulfill EXPECTATIONS?
 Financial Crisis? Prayers Not Answered? Healing Never Came? Family Troubles?
 Spiritual ATTACK? BORED? TIRED? SICK? MIND in WRONG PLACES?

You are in Good COMPANY// Most IMPRESSIVE Believer so Far in Luke
 Filled w/ SPIRIT of God from Womb – Fearless Preacher, even to KING Herod
 John the BAPTIZER's life based on BEDROCK of his FAITH in GOD
 NOW this Spiritual GIANT is in Valley of DESPAIR

1. Doubts about the Lord

Gospel of Luke > HONEST Account of Life of Jesus > CONVINCING the Reader
 Confronts w/ FACTS presented FAIRLY & FULLY > Make Informed Decision

...it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent
 Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been
 taught.
 Luke 1.3,4

1st Reader > Theophilus > SEEKER – Luke gives MEATY BONE to Chew On
 Historically Accurate, Best Literary Style any NT Writer – CLEAR Presentation

2 Inspired Volumes – Gospel: Jesus on Earth / Acts: Jesus in Heaven

a. Expectations

Last Ref to John Baptist: 3.20 > LOCKED Up in Herod's PRISON / STILL In?
 John PREACHED Greater One, Stronger One was COMING > Not Clear WHO?
 vs. 18-19 John's disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them,
 he sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we
 expect someone else?"

SPECIFIC Question > NOT “Are you SENT from God?” Of Course he WAS EXACTLY > Are you MESSIAH? – Expected, Anticipated, ANOINTED ONE

In LUKE this is FIRST CONVERSATION between John & Jesus > INDIRECT
John PROMISED a Messiah / John was CONVINCED Messiah WAS Coming
BUT John NEVER says exactly that JESUS is the ONE!

Luke tells us JOHN IN PRISON BEFORE tells us John Baptized Jesus
BAPTISM Narrative: No Dialogue w/ John – John NOT MENTIONED w/ Jesus

Jesus NOT AGENT of God John EXPECTING, Crowds in NAIN said Prophet
John not going to BANK his FUTURE on POPULAR PERCEPTIONS

John – HONEST Question: Where is JUDGMENT God told him was COMING?

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?...The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."
Luke 3.7,9

v. 20 When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, `Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?'"

Jesus NOT ANGRY or DISAPPOINTED or OFFENDED by John’s QUESTION
See PSALMS > God INVITES our LAMENTS, COMPLAINTS, QUESTIONS

b. Explanation

vs. 21,22 At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

Jesus **REPLY** seems **OBSCURE** > **REVIEW** of Scope of Jesus' **MINISTRY**
PITHY Phrases – Quotes from Prophet Isaiah – Context: **MESSIANIC** Kingdom

Following his **MANIFESTO**: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Luke 4.18,19

John was **NATIONISTIC** – Healing **ROMAN** Centurion Servants?

Most Jews wanted **ROME** Destroyed > Jesus gives them **DELIVERANCE!**

v. 23 Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.

If you're in **PRISON** – **DOUBTING** & **SUFFERING** – Might want **MORE!**

BLESSED if you are **NOT OFFENDED** by **JESUS**

Setbacks & Questions can **RAISE DOUBTS** & Questions to Certainties of Faith

God Never **PROMISED EXPLANATION** to all our Questions > Trust & **OBEY**

Jesus **WANTS DOUBTING** John to **BE ENCOURAGED**

His **MINISTRY** being **FULFILLED**, Messiah he **POINTED TO** has **NOW** Come!

Jesus **ASSURES** him the **KINGDOM** has Come / Jesus the **KING** is Here

c. Evidence

Luke set forth **PROGRESSION** of **MIRACLES** > Picture into Sharper **FOCUS**
 from Ch 4 > See **CLEARLY** – Who is Jesus, and What had he **COME** to **DO?**
HEALS Ma-in-Law/ Cast out **EVIL SPIRITS** / Cleansed **LEPERS** / **LAME** Walk

Now RESUSCITATION of a **DEAD YOUNG SON** in **NAIN**

v. 11 Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him.

v. 12 As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out--the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her.

VIVID Scene: CROWD w/ Jesus Confronts PROCESSION of MOURNERS

MOTHER would have WALKED in FRONT of Funeral Stretcher/Bier

LARGE Procession: TRAGEDY touched Many Hearts

Mother/Widow – No Husband, No Son = No Provider, No Protector

WOMAN left with DIFFICULT Future > ONLY Son Died THAT DAY

DECAYING Body lain on BOARD, WRAPPED in Cloth, NOT Closed COFFIN

v. 13 When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry."
HEART > 'Earthy' word: Jesus GUTS went out to her > BOWELS of MERCY'!

Compassion > Feeling YOUR PAIN in MY HEART

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows... Isaiah 53.4

True & Living God reaches His HURTING Creation with LOVING KINDNESS

v. 14 Then he went up and touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still.
He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!"

Jesus NOT INVITED to INTERVENE > NO Faith-Response Possible from Son

Jesus acts here by SOVEREIGN GRACE > REVERSAL of DEATH

TOUCHING Dead Body > CEREMONIALLY UNCLEAN – No Matter to Jesus

PAUL BRAND – LEPROSY Specialist – Great Advances & Understanding

Came to CHINA 1980's > THEN Very BASIC Care > BASED Mostly on FEAR

TAUGHT Chinese Doctors > Latest IDEAS about LEPROSY – INTERESTING

What GOT MOST Attention > Dr. Brand TOUCHED Lepers - COMPASSION

1st Time in Luke > Jesus called LORD > Lord over DEATH Itself

Dramatic CONFRONTATION – Divine AUTHORITY over Death

2 CROWDS – Joyful Followers of Jesus / Sad, Grieving Mourners MET There
Lord drew FIRM LINE > DEATH you've come THIS FAR, but NO FURTHER

Who is like the LORD our God, the One who sits enthroned on high, who stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth? He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes, with the princes of their people. He settles the barren woman in her home as a happy mother of children. Praise the LORD. Psalm 113.5-9

v. 15 The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

CRITICS – Then & Now – REALLY DEAD? SLEEPING? Was this TRUE?

DR. Luke says Young Man was DEAD > **“Dead Man SAT UP and TALKED”**

Every Biblical MIRACLE of Healing was SPONTANEOUS, UNSCHEDULED

Never FIXED a DATE or LOCATION to have HEALING SERVICE

Schedule TODAY? Schedule HOLY SPIRIT right OUT of the PROGRAM

Never Schedule HEALING Service in HOSPITAL Wards > NO OFFERINGS!

2. Day of the Lord

v. 20 `Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?'

It was all right his going about healing an odd slave here and raising a widow's son from the dead there – John had nothing against that. But what about the big issues? When was Jesus going to start putting oppressive governments right? Abolishing evil rulers like Herod? Putting down the Roman tyranny and giving Israel her political independence? ...when was Jesus going to get his prophet out of prison?
David Gooding

Jesus was not the Messiah John Expected

a. The Greatest

v. 24 After John's messengers left, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind?"

Jesus EULOGIZED John UNASHAMEDLY > Greatest of Prophets/Men
STERN, STRONG, FIRM Not Moved by CIRCUMSTANCES – Mighty OAK
PROBLEM is NOT PRISON > Luke never says JOHN is IN PRISON

v. 25 If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces.

Did you go into Wilderness to see FASHION SHOW?

Lived HARD Life in ROUGH PLACES on SIMPLE FOOD

...John...is not asking, Are you the Messiah or should we give up? Rather, he is saying, God has promised one to come whose ministry will be marked by the Holy Spirit and fire. We have confidence in that promise, and if you are not the one, we will keep looking. Fred Craddock

vs. 26,27 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you."

GREATEST of All OLD Covenant Prophets > FORERUNNER of Messiah
"See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me."

Malachi 3.1

v. 28 I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John...

GREAT Not in PERSONAL Identity > PRIVILEGE & POSITION as Prophet
John SAW and even BAPTIZED the LONG EXPECTED One – MESSIAH

Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow...Even angels long to look into these things. 1 Peter 1.10-12

John GREAT in Terms of OPPORTUNITY – No Other OT Prophet Saw Him

b. The Least

v. 28 I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; *yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.*"

v. 26 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you...

As PROPHET he has LIMITED Viewpoint of OLD COVENANT

OT Understanding _____ X _____

"Day of the Lord"

Day of Lord – ONE FINAL Day – Blessing on Faithful / Judgment on Enemies

John: "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Luke 3.16,17

John belongs to OLD, PASSING Order: Jewish Types, Promises, Ceremonies

Romantic Notion > Live in Time of Abraham, Moses, David, Prophets
ALL of them WISH they could be YOU > Because of all YOU KNOW in Christ
Jesus brings NEW Order of Kingdom of Salvation

"The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it." Luke 16.16

John > TIME of PROMISE // Jesus > TIME of FULFILLMENT

Diff NOT btwn Jesus & John SAME SIDE / Diff. btwn Receiving & Rejecting
 vs. 31,32 "To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to each other: "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not cry."

Jesus was KEEN OBSERVER of Life and People > Miserable CHILDREN
 Kids play GAMES of Rituals they SAW on Streets – Weddings & Funerals
 PARABLE of the BRATS > SPOILED Children > 2 Bickering GROUPS
 NOTHING can make them HAPPY – POUTING over their Many PRIVILEGES

Jesus talking to SPOILED ADULTS – have NO CHILDISH EXCUSES
 Unreasonableness of People > Reject Jesus & John for OPPOSITE REASONS
 Picture of Closed HEARTED RELIGIOUS Leaders > Nothing PLEASES Them

vs. 33,34 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners."'

JOHN refused to play WEDDINGS / JESUS refused to play FUNERALS

JOHN was TOO GLOOMY / JESUS was TOO GIDDY

JOHN was DEMONIC / JESUS hung out with DRUNKARDS

JOHN FASTED Too Much / JESUS FEASTED Too Much

JOHN was too EXCLUSIVE / JESUS was too INCLUSIVE

JOHN's Message Too UNCOMFORTABLE / Jesus' Too COMPROMISING

b. Supper

vs. 33,34 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking...The Son of Man came eating and drinking...

STRANGE Criteria Evaluate RELIGIOUS Character > EATING HABITS

Today NEVER Measure POLITICAL or PASTORAL Candidate by Eating!

1st C PALESTINIAN JEWS > CENTRAL Importance of TABLE CULTURE

Luke 5 > Jesus CRITICIZED Severely for EATING Tax Collector Matt's House

TABLE Fellowship & Sabbath: Last Rites of Jewish Culture in Changing Society

Luke 7.36 > TABLE Fellowship issue CONSIDERED Again – Simon's House

Luke moves from PRINCIPLE to PARTICULAR EXAMPLE

Jewish critics of Peter: "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and *ate with them.*"

Acts 11.3

Next Time you PREACH to SINNERS > PACK your own LUNCH!

Religious Criticized Jesus – Friend of Sinners – They're Not Sinners

So Jesus was NO FRIEND of THEIRS

c. Saved

CROWDS IN NAIN > vs. 16 They were all filled with awe and praised God...
This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country.

Even if YOU are NOT RELIGIOUS > You still must RECKON with Jesus

Influence on HISTORY > SOCIAL Impact of those who Claim to Follow Him

Crowd Expressed OPINION of Him, So must YOU – NOW: No NEUTRALITY
IF – as He Claims – He is God & Lord – You must deal with HIM at End of Life

v. 16 "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people."

Great Prophet > INADEQUATE Christology – but HIGHEST Praise of Villagers
 REMINDED them of Elijah & Elisha who ALSO Raised the DEAD
 ELIJAH > LAY atop CORPSE and PLEAD WITH GOD for his LIFE
 ELISHA > LAY his STAFF across the DEAD BOY from SHUNEM
 JESUS – Simply SPOKE to the CORPSE > COMMANDED Death to LEAVE

Jesus is CENTRAL ISSUE of LUKE > Very REASON he Wrote this BOOK
 Angel Gabriel: “He will be great...” Luke 1.32

v. 35 “But wisdom is proved right by all her children.”

Truly Wise will proceed RIGHT Way – God’s PERSPECTIVE – Life & Eternity
 Wise NOT walk in CRITICAL Way that can NEVER be PLEASED
 John had to DECIDE just like We DECIDE, Respond to Testimony of OTHERS

DIFFERENT STYLES – John & Jesus – Same GOAL: Bring Sinners to GOD
 Important THING about Ministry > NOT its STYLE but its SUBSTANCE
 Warning to John and US – Do Not STUMBLE over Jesus – No Other Savior

"See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." Romans 9.33

We’ve GREATER Reason to Fear and Praise God > More Significant Visitation
 Jesus Came to Die on Cross > Life not just for ONE but ALL who Know Him
 Visited with SHALOM > as RISEN One who CALMS our All our FEARS
 Visiting NOW by HIS SPIRIT – Gathered in His NAME – Worship & FOLLOW
 We are NOT Sure what will Happen Tomorrow – but we Know God of
 Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow!

Luke 7.¹After he had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ²Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. ³When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant. ⁴And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, ⁵for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue." ⁶And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. ⁷Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. ⁸For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." ⁹When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." ¹⁰And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well. ¹¹Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. ¹²As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. ¹³And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." ¹⁴Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." ¹⁵And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" ¹⁷And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country. ¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, ¹⁹calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ²⁰And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'" ²¹In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. ²²And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³And blessed is the one who is not offended by me." ²⁴When John's messengers had gone, Jesus^[f] began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶What then did you go out to

see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is he of whom it is written, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.” ²⁸I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” ²⁹(When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John, ³⁰but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.) ³¹“To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? ³²They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, “We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.” ³³For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ ³⁴The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ ³⁵Yet wisdom is justified by all her children.”