

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 104 – April 14th – Luke 16:19-17:10

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Luke

Geldenhuis, Norval	<i>Commentary on the Gospel of Luke</i> , Marshall Morgan and Scott, London, 1950
Marshall, I Howard	<i>The Gospel of Luke</i> , The New International Greek Testament Commentary, Paternoster, Exeter, 1978
Morris, Leon	<i>Luke</i> (Tyndale NT Commentaries), IVP, London 1974

Verse 19-31

The Rich Man and Lazarus. "Two themes are combined in the parable. The first is the reversal of fortunes in the next world for the rich and the poor; this sums up the theme found in 1:53 and 6:20-26 and the warning against covetousness in 12:13-21... The second theme is that if the law and the prophets are insufficient to call the rich to repentance, even the return of someone resurrected from the dead will not achieve the desired effect. Miracles in themselves cannot melt stony hearts. Here again there is a link with the earlier part of the chapter in which the validity of the law and the prophets during the era of the gospel is upheld." Marshall

Verse 19

Ἄνθρωπος δὲ τις ἦν πλούσιος, καὶ ἐνεδιδύσκετο πορφύραν καὶ βύσσον εὐφραϊνόμενος καθ' ἡμέραν λαμπρῶς.

πλούσιος, α, ον rich, well-to-do

Secondary insertions in several MSS and versions provide a variety of names for the rich man.

ἐνδιδύσκω dress or clothe in

Imperfect for customary behaviour.

πορφύρα, ας f purple cloth

βύσσος, ου f fine linen

Fine underwear. Some suggest Egyptian cotton.

εὐφραίνω make glad, cheer up; pass be glad, rejoice

Here has the sense of feasting.

καθ' ἡμέραν daily

λαμπρῶς adv splendidly

"He strove over no higher purpose in life than to use his riches in selfishness and ostentation for worldly pleasure." Geldenhuis.

Verse 20

πτωχὸς δὲ τις ὀνόματι Λάζαρος ἐβέβλητο πρὸς τὸν πυλῶνα αὐτοῦ εἰλκωμένος

πτωχός, η, ον poor, pitiful

ὄνομα, τος n name

Λάζαρος is an abbreviation of 'eleazar' 'He (whom) God helps'. The name suggests that in his misery this beggar looked to God for aid.

ἐβέβλητο Verb, pluperf pass indic, 3 s βαλλω trans throw, throw down, place

"The pluperfect ἐβέβλητο could mean that he had been lain by friends in a suitable place for begging, but more probably it means 'he was lying'...; the implication is that he was ill or crippled." Marshall

πύλων, ὄνος m gate, gateway, entrance, porch

Here an ornamental gateway to a mansion.

εἰλκωμένος Verb, perf pass dep ptc, m nom s ἐλκομαι be covered in sores

Here alone in the NT.

Verse 21

καὶ ἐπιθυμῶν χορτασθῆναι ἀπὸ τῶν πιπτόντων ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τοῦ πλουσίου· ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ κύνες ἐρχόμενοι ἐπέλειχον τὰ ἔλκη αὐτοῦ.

ἐπιθυμῶ long for, desire, lust after

May express an unfulfilled wish.

χορτασθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin χορταζω feed, satisfy

πιπτο fall

τῶν ψιγίων (small crumbs) is added before τῶν πιπτόντων in most MSS. The words are omitted by p⁷⁵ & B L it sy^s et al. Metzger argues the words are a scribal addition copied from Mt 15:27.

τραπέζα, ης f table

κύων, κυνός m dog

"Such crumbs were normally eaten by the dogs (Mt 15:27; note the close correspondence in language), which also turned their unwelcome attention to the beggar. ἀλλὰ καὶ has the sense 'and worse than all'." Marshall. Only the dogs seemed to have taken an interest in Lazarus!

ἐπιλείχω lick

Here alone in the NT.

ἔλκος, οὺς n sore, boil

Verse 22

ἐγένετο δὲ ἀποθανεῖν τὸν πτωχὸν καὶ ἀπενεχθῆναι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀγγέλων εἰς τὸν κόλπον Ἀβραάμ· ἀπέθανεν δὲ καὶ ὁ πλούσιος καὶ ἐτάφη.

ἀποθανεῖν aor. infin. ἀποθνήσκω die, face death

ἀπενεχθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ἀποφέρω carry, carry away

κόλπος, ου m bosom, chest, lap, bay

The expression is used as a picture of the banquet of Paradise – at a meal, one reclined on another (compare John 13:23). "The poor man enjoys close fellowship with Abraham at the messianic banquet (cf. 13:29)." Marshall

ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s ἀποθνήσκω bury
ἐτάφη Verb, aor pass indic, 3s θάπτω bury

Highlighting the outwardly rich and splendid occasion that the rich man (in contrast to the poor) enjoyed even in death. Yet the contrast with κόλπον Ἀβραάμ also highlights the fact that behind the facade of the funeral it was the poor man who was rich in death.

Verse 23

καὶ ἐν τῷ ᾄδῃ ἐπάρας τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ, ὑπάρχων ἐν βασάνοις, ὄρᾳ Ἀβραάμ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν καὶ Λάζαρον ἐν τοῖς κόλποις αὐτοῦ.

ᾄδης, ου m Hades, the world of the dead, death

ἐπάρας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἐπαίρω ὑπαρχω be (equivalent to εἰμι)

βασανος, ου f torment, pain

ὄραω trans see, observe

μακροθεν adv far off, at a distance, from a distance

κόλποις the plural is often used for 'bosom' because the word properly means the folds of the robe.

Verse 24

καὶ αὐτὸς φωνήσας εἶπεν· Πάτερ Ἀβραάμ, ἐλέησόν με καὶ πέμψον Λάζαρον ἵνα βάνῃ τὸ ἄκρον τοῦ δακτύλου αὐτοῦ ὕδατος καὶ καταψύξῃ τὴν γλῶσσάν μου, ὅτι ὀδυνῶμαι ἐν τῇ φλογὶ ταύτῃ.

Zahn wisely comments, "What Jesus relates further about his conversation with Abraham does not in any sense serve the end of unveiling the secrets of the beyond to the Pharisees whom he addresses, or indeed to his disciples who were present, but (as in his other parables) presents in intuitive forms which were familiar to his hearers an imaginary narrative in order to make them see and realise vividly what awaits them if they combine with pride in being Abraham's sons and the appearance of conscientious attachment to the Law and Prophets the rich man's sentiments and standards of life."

φωνεω call, call out

ἐλεησον aor. imperat. ἐλεαω and ἐλεεω be merciful, show kindness; pass. receive mercy

πεμπω send

"Even in Hades he thinks of Lazarus as there to look after *his* wants, while in his lifetime he had never spared a thought for Lazarus's wants; he remains totally blind and unrepentant. The fact that he knows the beggar's name indicates that he knew who he was, even if he never did anything for him." Marshall

βάπτω dip

ἄκρον, ου n extreme limits, tip

δακτυλος, ου m finger

ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n water

καταψυχω cool, refresh

Here alone in the NT.

γλωσσα, ης f tongue

ὀδυναομαι be in great pain, be in great distress

φλοξ, φλογος f flame

The flame should not be taken literally, but symbolically. But it is rightly commented by Schilder, "Let nobody say, it is *only* symbolical *and therefore* not so terrible. By mere inversion one could say, if the symbol, the mere picture, is already awe-inspiring, how horrible must the actual be!"

Verse 25

εἶπεν δὲ Ἀβραάμ· Τέκνον, μνήσθητι ὅτι ἀπέλαβες τὰ ἀγαθὰ σου ἐν τῇ ζωῇ σου, καὶ Λάζαρος ὁμοίως τὰ κακὰ· νῦν δὲ ὧδε παρακαλεῖται σὺ δὲ ὀδυνᾶσαι.

τεκνον, ου n child; pl descendants
μνησθητι aor. imperat. μιμησκομαι
remember, call to mind; be
remembered

ἀπελαβες 2sing aor. ἀπολαμβάνω receive
back, get back

Has force of receive back *in full*.

ἀγαθος, η, ον good, useful, fitting
ζωη, ης f life

Geldenhuis says of the rich man that he "had not made friends by means of the 'mammon of unrighteousness' of which he had received so plentiful a supply, and so, when it failed, there was no-one to welcome him into the eternal habitations, as there would have been had he seized the opportunity to make Lazarus his friend."

ὁμοίως likewise, in the same way
κακος, η, ον evil, bad, harm
ὧδε adv here, in this place
παρακαλεω exhort, encourage

Cf. Mt 5:4

ὀδυναομαι be in great pain, be in great
distress

Here and 2:48; 16:24; Acts 20:28. Marshall says that the sense here is the 'spiritual torture of remorse' rather than physical pain.

Verse 26

καὶ ἐν πᾶσι τούτοις μεταξύ ἡμῶν καὶ ὑμῶν χάσμα μέγα ἐστήρικται, ὅπως οἱ θέλοντες διαβῆναι ἐνθεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς μὴ δύνονται, μηδὲ ἐκεῖθεν πρὸς ἡμᾶς διαπερῶσιν.

ἐν πασι τουτοις "as well as all this",
"besides all this"

μεταξυ between
χασμα, τος n chasm, pit

Here alone in the NT.

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great
ἐστήρικται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s στηριζω
establish, set firm

ὅπως (or ὅπως ἂν) that, in order that
θελω wish, will

διαβηναι aor. infin. διαβαινω cross, cross
over

ἐνθεν adv from here, from there
μηδε negative particle nor, and not
ἐκεῖθεν from there
διαπεραω cross over

"The judgment is the irrevocable; there is no suggestion of purgatory." Marshall

Verse 27

εἶπεν δέ· Ἐρωτῶ σε οὖν, πάτερ, ἵνα πέμψῃς αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρὸς μου,

ἐρωταω ask, request, beg, urge
σε Pronoun, acc s συ
πεμψης aor. subj. πεμπω send

He still thinks that Lazarus ought to serve him.

Verse 28

ἔχω γὰρ πέντε ἀδελφούς, ὅπως διαμαρτύρηται αὐτοῖς, ἵνα μὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔλθωσιν εἰς τὸν τόπον τοῦτον τῆς βασιάνου.

πεντε (indeclinable) five
διαμαρτυρομαι declare solemnly, charge
ἐλθωσιν aor. subj. ἐρχομαι
τοπος, ου m place
βασανος, ου f see v.23

Verse 29

λέγει δὲ Ἀβραάμ· Ἐχουσι Μωϋσῆα καὶ τοὺς προφήτας· ἀκουσάτωσαν αὐτῶν.

ἀκουσατωσαν aor. subj. ἀκουω

I.e. as they are read in the synagogue.

"From these words it follows that the rich man was lost because he did not listen to the Law and the Prophets and not because he was rich." Geldenhuis.

"The Old Testament forbids neither being rich nor the mere enjoyment of earthly goods; but next to the love of God it demands above everything else practical love to one's neighbour, in which this rich man had completely failed as regards the poor man at his door... cf. 10:29."

Verse 30

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· Οὐχί, πάτερ Ἀβραάμ, ἀλλ' ἐάν τις ἀπὸ νεκρῶν πορευθῆ πρὸς αὐτοὺς μετανοήσουσιν.

οὐχι (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no; used in
questions expecting an affirmative answer.

ἐάν if, even if, though

νεκρος, α, ον dead

πορευομαι go

"For Luke's readers there would be an inescapable allusion to the resurrection of Jesus." Marshall

μετανοησουσιν fut. μετανοεω repent, have
a change of heart

Verse 31

εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ· Εἰ Μωϋσέως καὶ τῶν προφητῶν οὐκ ἀκούουσιν, οὐδ' ἐάν τις ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆ πεισθήσονται.

ἀναστῆ Verb, 2nd aor act subj, 3 s ἀνιστημι
rise, stand up, come back to life

πεισθησονται fut. pass. πειθω persuade,
convince, win over

Neither the resurrection of another Lazarus from the dead (John 11), nor the resurrection of Jesus himself would, in itself, be enough to persuade – to engender faith.

Luke 17:1

Εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ·
Ἀνένδεκτόν ἐστιν τοῦ τὰ σκάνδαλα μὴ ἐλθεῖν,
πλὴν οὐαὶ δι' οὗ ἔρχεται·

Cf. Mk 9:42; Mt 18:6f.

μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower
ἀνένδεκτος, ου impossible

Here alone in the NT.

σκανδαλον, ου n that which causes sin/
offence, obstacle

ἐλθεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐρχομαι
πλὴν but, yet, nevertheless, however
οὐαὶ woe! how horrible it will be!

Cf. 6:24

"Do we as individuals and as a church live in such a manner that we keep others back from Jesus and make it difficult for them to walk the right road so that they sin?" Geldenhuys.

Verse 2

λυσιτελεῖ αὐτῷ εἰ λίθος μυλικὸς περίκειται
περὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔρριπται εἰς τὴν
θάλασσαν ἢ ἵνα σκανδαλίση τῶν μικρῶν
τούτων ἓνα.

λυσιτελεῖ impers it is advantageous or
better

Here alone in the NT.

λίθος, ου m stone, precious stone
μυλικός, η, ου pertaining to a mill

Here alone in NT. Describes the round upper stone of a grinding mill, pierced with a hole in the centre so that it can be rotated.

περικεῖται be placed around
τραχηλός, ου m neck
ἔρριπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ῥιπτω
throw, throw down

θάλασσα, ης f sea
ἢ or, than

σκανδαλίση aor. subj. σκανδαλιζω cause
(someone) to sin, cause (someone) to
give up the faith

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one, single
μικρός small, little

May refer literally to children or metaphorically to the disciple or to the poor to whom the gospel is preached.

Verse 3

προσεχετε ἑαυτοῖς. ἐὰν ἀμάρτη ὁ ἀδελφός σου
ἐπιτίμησον αὐτῷ, καὶ ἐὰν μετανοήσῃ ἄφες
αὐτῷ·

προσεχω pay close attention to, be on
guard, watch, watch out

The opening two words may be linked with the previous verses as a reinforcement of the warning, but more probably act as an introduction to what follows. As in the parable of the speck and the plank, we have no right nor competence to rebuke the sin of another unless we first watch ourselves and deal radically with sin in our own hearts.

ἀμάρτη aor. subj. ἀμαρτανω sin, commit
sin

ἐπιτιμαω command, rebuke

"The saying implicitly forbids the nursing of grudges and criticism of the offender behind his back." Marshall

μετανοεω repent, have a change of heart
ἄφες aor. imperat. ἀφημι cancel, forgive

Verse 4

καὶ ἐὰν ἐπτάκις τῆς ἡμέρας ἀμαρτήσῃ εἰς σέ
καὶ ἐπτάκις ἐπιστρέψῃ πρὸς σέ λέγων·
Μετανοῶ, ἀφήσεις αὐτῷ.

ἐπτάκις adv seven times

Signifying an indefinite number of times (Ps
119 (118):164)

ἐπιστρεφω turn back, return, turn

We are to deal this way with one another because this is the way in which God has dealt and continues to deal with us.

Verse 5

Καὶ εἶπαν οἱ ἀπόστολοι τῷ κυρίῳ· Πρόσθες
ἡμῖν πίστιν.

προσθεσ aor. imperat προστιθημι add to,
increase

πιστις, εως f faith, trust, belief

Verse 6

εἶπεν δὲ ὁ κύριος· Εἰ ἔχετε πίστιν ὡς κόκκον
σινάπεως, ἐλέγετε ἂν τῆ συκαμίνῳ ταύτῃ·
Ἐκριζώθητι καὶ φυτεύθητι ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ· καὶ
ὕψηκουσεν ἂν ὑμῖν.

κόκκος, ου m seed, grain

σινάπι, εως n mustard

The power of faith does not lie in its quantity but in its object.

ἂν particle indicating contingency
συκαμίνος, ου f mulberry tree

Here alone in the NT. Probably the fig-mulberry which was proverbially deep rooted.

ἐκριζωθητι Verb, aor pass imperat, 2 s
ἐκριζω uproot
φυτεύητι Verb, aor pass imperat, 2 s
φυτεύω plant
θαλασσα, ης f sea
ὕπακουω obey, be subject to

"Manson, *Sayings...* holds that the absurdity of the transplanting a tree is a warning against misunderstanding: 'This word of Jesus does not invite Christians to become conjurers and magicians, but heroes like those whose exploits are celebrated in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.'" Marshall

Verse 7

Τίς δὲ ἐξ ὑμῶν δοῦλον ἔχων ἀροτριῶντα ἢ ποιμαίνοντα, ὃς εἰσελθόντι ἐκ τοῦ ἀγροῦ ἐρεῖ αὐτῷ· Εὐθέως παρελθὼν ἀνάπεσε,

"The situation is that of a small farmer who has one slave to look after his outside work ... and to do any housework." Marshall

ἀροτριῶντα Verb, pres act ptc, m acc s
ἀροτριαῶ plough
ποιμαίνοντα Verb, pres act ptc, m acc s
ποιμαινῶ keep sheep, tend as a shepherd
εἰσελθόντι Verb, aor act ptc, m & n dat s
εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in
ἀγρος, ου m field, farm, countryside
ἐρεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s λεγῶ
παραελθων aor. ptc. παρερχομαι come, arrive
ἀναπεσε aor. imperat ἀναπιπῶ sit, sit at table, lean

Verse 8

ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ἐρεῖ αὐτῷ· Ἐτοίμασον τί δειπνήσω καὶ περιζωσάμενος διακόνει μοι ἕως φάγω καὶ πίω, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα φάγεσαι καὶ πίεσαι σύ;
έτοιμαζῶ prepare, make ready
δειπνήσω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s δειπνεῶ eat, dine
περιζωννυμι and περιζωννυω wrap around (of clothes); midd dress oneself, make oneself ready
διακονεῶ serve, wait on
φάγω Verb, aor act indic/subj, 1 s ἐσθίω and ἐσθῶ eat
πίω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s πινῶ drink
φάγεσαι Verb, fut, midd dep indic, 2 s ἐσθίω
πίεσαι aor. imperat πινῶ

Verse 9

μη̄ ἔχει χάριν τῷ δούλῳ ὅτι ἐποίησεν τὰ διαταχθέντα;
χαρις, ιτος f here = thanks, thankfulness

For ἔχω χάριν meaning 'express thanks' cf. 1 Tim 1:12; 2 Tim 1:3.

διαταχθέντα Verb, aor pass ptc, n nom/acc pl
διατασσῶ command, instruct

"The point is then simply that slaves have to carry out their duties without expecting that they thereby place their masters under obligation." Marshall

Verse 10

οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ὅταν ποιήσητε πάντα τὰ διαταχθέντα ὑμῖν, λέγετε ὅτι Δοῦλοι ἀχρεῖοί ἐσμεν, ὃ ὀφείλομεν ποιῆσαι πεποιθήκαμεν.

οὕτως adv. formed from οὕτος thus, in this way

ὅταν when, whenever, as often as
ἀχρεῖος, ον worthless, mere

Here and Mt 25:30. The meaning here is 'unworthy' rather than 'useless'.

ὀφείλω owe, ought, must
ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιεῶ

What we do can never add to God. At our best we can but begin to discharge a little of the debt we owe.

Post Script: Given what is said in verses 7-10 concerning the proper relationship between ourselves and God, how remarkable is the incident recorded in John 13 when God incarnate takes on the role of the most menial of servants. But his was no unprofitable service.

It is vital that the Christian retains a right self-image which, reflecting the nature of grace, keeps both sides of this picture in balanced perspective.