LUKE
Chapter 11

The Lord's Prayer

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." 2 And he said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. 3 Give us each day our daily bread, 4 and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation." 5 And he said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, 6 for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything'? 8 I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. 9 And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 11 What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; 12 or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

The transition from the previous passage makes sense when one understands that the story of Mary and Martha taught the proper way to worship. It is natural that Jesus should then teach the proper way to pray. Right worship begins with *receiving* the gift of grace from above; that is why Mary chose the better portion. The same is true of prayer. First God bestows sonship through Jesus, his Son, and with that gift comes holiness and righteousness. Only then can one call upon God as Father and hallow his name. Through this section, there is an emphasis on gifts and giving: God gives daily bread and forgiveness (11:3–4), the awakened friend gives provisions for the midnight guest (11:5–8), those who ask will receive (11:9–10), fathers give gifts to their sons (11:11–13a), and God gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask (11:13b). In that way, prayer is placed in the context of right worship. Prayer begins with the Giver and his gifts and only then moves to the one who asks for the gifts. (CC p. 464)

11:1 *Jesus was praying.* Not only on special occasions (e.g., baptism, 3:21; choosing the Twelve, 6:12; Gethsemane, 22:41) but also as a regular practice (5:16; Mt 14:23; Mk 1:35). (CSB)

προσευχόμενον—This general verb for "pray" occurs three times in 11:1–2. The verb usually denotes a liturgical prayer (as in 1:10; 18:10, 11) or a petitionary prayer (as in 18:1; 22:40–46). The Lord's Prayer is primarily a petitionary prayer, rather than a "blessing" (εὐλογέω) or "thanksgiving" (εὐχαριστέω). Cf. αἰτεῖτε in 11:9. (CC p. 460)

Prayer is not giving something to God; it is asking for something. "A person who wants to pray must present a petition, naming and asking for something which he desires; otherwise it cannot be called a prayer" (Martin Luther, LC III 24; Tappert, p. 423]). One difference between the

Pharisee's prayer and that of the tax collector prayers in Luke 18:10-13 is that the Pharisee asks for nothing. The tax collector's prayer is pure petition. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 22, Part 3)

one of his disciples – τις τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ—The audience for Jesus' teaching of the Lord's Prayer (11:1–4), the parable of the midnight guest (11:5–8), and the encouragement to persistence (11:9–13) is his disciples; this would include the Twelve and the seventy (-two) as well as the women (8:1–3) and other followers. (CC pp. 460-461)

Neither time, place, nor questioner are identified. (TLSB)

teach us to pray. The Lord's model prayer was given here in answer to a request, and is similar to Mt 6:9–13, where it is a part of the Sermon on the Mount. Six petitions are included in the prayer as given in the Sermon on the Mount by Matthew (combining the last two petitions into one), whereas five appear in the prayer in Luke. (CSB)

This is the only time in the Gospels when the disciples asked Jesus to teach them. Here Jesus teaches us to ask God the Father and for what to ask. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 22, Part 3)

Fixed forms of prayer were common in first-century Judaism. The people of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the followers of John the Baptist, and other groups used set prayers. (TLSB)

The Lord's Prayer itself is evoked by a request (11:1). This is the only occasion on which any of the disciples ask Jesus to teach them something. What "one of" them asks Jesus is to teach them how to petition God. Each rabbi had a particular way of petitioning God, and the disciples are aware that John had taught his disciples how to petition. While the Lord's Prayer is the most important teaching of Jesus on the subject, it is not Jesus' only teaching. In 18:1–8, for example, Jesus teaches the necessity of persistent prayer, and his example in passages such as 6:12 and 22:39–46 is also instructive. Luke's version of Jesus' petitionary prayer is shorter and more direct than Matthew's version, which is customarily followed in the church today. The Lukan form contains (1) the invocation of God as Father; (2) two petitions that refer to God (that his name be hallowed and his kingdom come); and (3) three petitions that deal with the needs of the petitioner. (CC p. 465)

11:2-4 This version of the Lord's Prayer is substantially shorter than the one found in Mt. Jesus likely taught this prayer differently in a variety of settings. (TLSB)

11:2 *Father* – Since Jesus teaches us to call God "Father," then we are God's children. Jesus has put us in the same relationship He has with God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 22, Part 3)

- We say "Father" because the believers in Christ throughout the world are the children of one Father and therefore we pray for and with one another.

- With this name we likewise confess that we are the children of God, which again stirs his heart mightily; for there is no lovelier sound than that of a child speaking to his father. (LW V. 42 p. 22)

- Praying to Father who couldn't love us more.

- Abba – Is expressive of an especially close relationship. - Papa

- Not only an introduction, but primarily a relationship.

- Busy can always be reached. Hybals.. dad and private number.

- An Indian boy needs to walk through a forest by himself as a part of becoming a man. An Indian father is always stationed nearby.

- His care and concern and affection for us are not dependent upon his moods or our good behavior or our response to his overtures.

- This title teaches those who pray to examine themselves, as they are indeed the sons of God, members and brothers of Christ, one engrafted into the Father. For if they go without repenting of their sin and not seeking and embracing Christ by true faith, they cannot call God "Father" unless they believe that by Christ they are reconciled to God. (Chemnitz p. 29)

- Though the boy is willing to stop being a son, the father is not willing to stop being a father. – Of all his names, Father is God's favorite. We know he loves this name most because this is the one he used the most. In the Gospel of John alone, Jesus repeats this name 156 times. – This reminds us we are welcome in God's house because we have been adopted by the owner. I've heard of unplanned pregnancies, but I've never heard of an unplanned adoption. – You and I both know that an adoption is not something we earn; it's something we receive. To be adopted into a family is not a feat one achieves, but rather a gift one accepts. – Thank you for adopting me into your family. (Notes from "The Great House of God" by Max Lucado)

Πάτερ—This would be the Greek equivalent of Aramaic ἀββα, which Jesus and the early Christians used to address God (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6; cf. Lk 10:21). "Daddy," however, is not a good translation. R. Stein, *Luke,* 324, notes:

> It was once popular to say that "Abba" or "Father" was the equivalent of "Daddy." The reason for this is that small children called their father by this term. In the Jewish Talmud (*Sanh.* 70b) we read, "An infant cannot say 'father' [Abba] and 'mother' until it has tasted wheat [i.e., until it is weaned]." However, adults also called their fathers "Abba," which indicates that "Daddy" is a less appropriate translation of "Abba" than "Father." (CC p. 461)

The connotation of Πάτερ is an intimate familial relationship between "Father" and his child, regardless of whether the child is young or a mature adult. (CC p. 461)

"Who art in heaven" and the Third and Seventh Petitions are not found in P^{75} B and the Vulgate. (ℵ has the Third Petition but not "who art in heaven" or the Seventh Petition.) The shorter version, not harmonized with Matthew or church custom, is the preferred text. Jesus gave a *model* for prayer; he did not include every petition that may be appropriate. The following stories and examples (11:5–13) encourage all kinds of frequent, persistent prayers. (CC p. 461)

Jesus begins in typical Hebrew fashion by calling on God. (Gen. 15:2; 28:20; 1 Sam 2:1; 1 Kg 8:23) In fact, several OT prayers address God as "our Father" (Is 63:16; 64:8 [MT 64:7]; 1 Chr 29:10). Jesus has already used "Father" for God in his prayer after sending out the seventy (-two)

(Lk 10:21). By instructing his disciples to address God as "Father," Jesus places them into the same relationship with God that he has. Throughout the gospel, the disciples will observe Jesus' relationship to God the Father and come to realize that through the Son of God they are sons of God. (Rom. 8:15, 23; 9:4; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5)

The Second and Seventh Petitions of the Lord's Prayer (see Mt. 6:9-13) are not included in what are commonly considered the better texts. Jesus is not giving a rigid set of words that must be spoken, but rather a framework for prayer. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 22, Part 3)

hallowed be your name –

- God's name is hallowed when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity and when we, as the children of God, also lead a holy life according to the Word of God.

- In this petition we pray for exactly the same thing that God demands in the Second Commandment. (Book of Concord p. 426)

- To hallow means to praise, extol and honor in word and deed. (Book of Concord p. 426)

- The names of all virtues are also names given to God. And since we are baptized into these names and are consecrated and hallowed by them, and since they have thus become our names, it follows that God's children should be called and also be gentle, merciful, chaste, just, truthful, guileless, friendly, peaceful, and kindly disposed toward all, even toward our enemies. (LW V. 42 p. 28)

- For by honoring God we bring him the first and the last and the highest offering within our power; nor does he seek and ask for more. Moreover, we cannot give God anything else, for it is he who gives us everything else. (LW V. 42 p. 36)

- This implies the title, person, power, authority, character, and the very reputation of God.

- We carry his name. Therefore his name, reputation, person and character are at stake in us.

- For Middle Easterners it is the person himself.

ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου—To sanctify (in Hebrew, the Piel or Hiphil of קָדַשׁ) is to revere and treat as holy, or in older English, to hallow. God commanded Israel to honor his name as holy. (Lev. 20:3; 21:6; 22:2, 32; Is 29:23) But Israel failed to hallow his name. (Ezk. 36:20-21; 43:7-8; Amos 2:7) God promised that his people would once again honor his name as holy. (Ezk. 20:39; 39:7 Ps. 145:21) The verb ἁγιασθήτω (as well as ἐλθέτω in the next petition) is a theological passive. It is hallowed among us only because of the work of God's Holy Spirit in us. God alone made the temple to be the dwelling place for his holy name. (1 Kg. 9:3, 7; 2 Chr. 7:16, 20; Ezk. 36:22-23; 39:25) Christians are the new temple, the ones who bear God's holy name. God's name is honored as holy by joyfully calling upon it for help and salvation. (Ps. 33:21; 103:1; 105:3; 106:47; 1 Chr. 16:10, 35)

Jesus first petitions the Father regarding who God is—his name—and what God does—his reigning as King. God's holy name and God's gracious rule in his (present) kingdom form the basis for the disciples to approach the Father confidently with their own petitions. By beginning with God-centered petitions, Jesus instructs the disciples that when they petition the Father, the

gifts they receive come from the one who is holy and whose kingdom is coming. Jesus instructs his disciples to treat God's name as holy by calling on God as Father, trusting that he will respond graciously for the sake of his Son. (CC p. 465)

kingdom come – His reign through the Gospel in the hearts and lives of believers.

- The kingdom of God is his ruling as king over whole universe (kingdom of power which is already present), the church on earth (kingdom of grace), and the church and angels in heaven (kingdom of glory).

- We pray, therefore, that the Holy Ghost may be given to us and that he may be powerful in us by the Word. (Chemnitz p. 48)

- Our prayer is that the kingdom of God may be within us (Luke 17:21). We also pray that this kingdom may continually be spread further abroad so that it may also come to other nations and countries/ (Chemnitz p. 49)

ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου—The coming of the kingdom is a present reality that is already being inaugurated now in Jesus and his disciples (9:1–6; 10:1–12). The kingdom comes in the preaching of Jesus (9:11, 27), the Twelve (9:2, cf. 9:60, 62), and the seventy (-two) (10:9, 11; cf. 9:60, 62). Following this petition a few manuscripts and church fathers have "let your Holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us" (ἐλθέτω τὸ πνεῦμά σου τὸ ἅγιον ἐφ' ἡμας καὶ καθαρισάτω ἡμᾶς). The consensus is that this extra petition was derived either from the baptismal liturgy or the liturgy of the Lord's Supper, since the early church used the Lord's Prayer at Baptism and at the Eucharist. Communion liturgies, from the earliest church documents down to the present time, have included a prayer for the Holy Spirit to prepare the communicants for the sacred meal (F. Precht, ed., *Lutheran Worship: History and Practice* [St. Louis: Concordia, 1993] 298). The prayer asking for the Holy Spirit in Divine Service II in *Lutheran Worship,* preceding the Lord's Prayer in the Service of the Sacrament, retains a petition similar to the extra petition added to the Lord's Prayer in a few manuscripts and church fathers (quoted above): "Send your Holy Spirit into our hearts that he may establish in us a living faith and prepare us joyfully to remember our Redeemer and receive him who comes to us in his body and blood" (*Lutheran Worship* [St. Louis: Concordia, 1982] 171; cf. B. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary,* 154–56). (CC pp. 461-462)

11:3 *our daily bread* – τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον—This is the most difficult phrase in the Lord's Prayer. Widely divergent interpretations of the prayer as a whole appeal for support to their particular rendition of this petition. (CC p. 462)

The meaning of ἐπιούσιος is uncertain. This adjective only occurs in this phrase of the Lord's Prayer, recorded in identical words by Matthew (6:11), Luke (11:3), and the Didache (8:2). Origen's longstanding claim (De Orat. 27, 7) that the evangelists coined the word ἐπιούσιος has gained new credence since its one alleged occurrence in secular Greek has been discounted (BAGD). Because the context does not unambiguously clarify the word's meaning, philologists resort to etymology and the meanings of similar words. (CC p. 462)

The Lukan petition for daily bread in the Lord's Prayer is the first of the three petitions that focus on the needs of the petitioners. The petition for bread corresponds well to the Lukan theme of table fellowship. It contains the enigmatic ἐπιούσιος, leading to four main possibilities for the kind of bread requested: "bread essential for existence"; "bread for today"; "bread for the following day"; or "bread for the (more distant) future." (CC p. 465)

The history of interpretation reflects all of those possibilities, and in various combinations. Two principal understandings predominate: (1) physical bread needed for life in this world now and (2) eschatological bread that provides the life of the age to come as spiritual sustenance even now. Rather than opposing those two possibilities, Luke's overall theology suggests that they both may be in view. That would follow the pattern of the OT manna, which was physical, earthly food, but was provided miraculously and in abundance, pointing to the fullness of God's gifts to come in Christ. Now in the gospel, the heavenly and eternal kingdom of God *has broken into this age in Jesus*. He grants the forgiveness of sins, heals, and raises the dead. Already now he is furnishing, at least in part, the life—both physical and spiritual—of the age to come. Therefore, in the prayer *Jesus* taught *his disciples*,

> the bread for which we pray is *at the one and the same time* both earthly bread to meet the hunger and need of the present day, and also the future bread which will satisfy the elect in the eschatological kingdom and is already given to us in anticipation—miraculous feedings of the crowds were, in sign and reality, present experiences of the future messianic meal at which those who now hunger will be satisfied. (CC pp. 465-466)

G. Wainwright, *Eucharist and Eschatology,* 34 (emphasis Wainwright). On p. 168, n. 113, he notes that J. Jeremias, *The Lord's Prayer,* 25–27, also argues for this interpretation. Jeremias' intent is to argue that "for Jesus, earthly bread and the bread of life are not antithetical" (p. 25). Jeremias also states:

> > The bread which he [Jesus] proffered when he sat at table with publican and sinners was everyday bread, and yet it was more: it was bread of life. The bread which he broke for his disciples at the Last Supper was earthly bread, and yet it was more: his body given for many in death, the gift of a portion in the atoning power of his death. *Every meal his disciples had with him was a usual eating and drinking, and yet it was more: a meal of salvation, a messianic meal, image and anticipation of the meal at the consummation, because he was the master of the house* (p. 26; emphasis added). (CC p. 466)

The earthly and physical necessities of life surely are included in this petition and should not be minimized, but they do not exhaust the significance of "bread" in the gospel. Before offering further support from Luke for this position, it may be helpful to note that it is consistent with the views of many fathers of the early church and Luther. The reformer saw "daily bread" as encompassing all of God's gifts—spiritual and eschatological, as well as physical and temporal. The petition for "daily bread," in Luther's view, subsumes the following petitions for forgiveness and protection from temptation, much as all of the Ten Commandments are summed up in the First Commandment. Best known are Luther's explanations in his catechisms, where he limits his discussion to benefits that would fall under the First Article of the Creed: "daily bread" signifies "everything that belongs to our entire life in this world," such as "food and drink, clothing, house, home, and a sound body; … a good wife, children, and servants; … our work, craft, or occupation … good friends, etc." as well as beneficent government rulers and protection from enemies, tempest, war, famine, wicked people, and the devil. (CC pp. 466-467)

Yet particularly in earlier writings Luther emphasized God's spiritual, eschatological, and sacramental gifts. Luther's longest treatment of this petition is in *An Exposition of the Lord's Prayer for Simple Laymen* (1519), where he says, "The bread, the Word, and the food are none other than Jesus Christ our Lord himself. Thus he declares in John 6 [:51], 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven.'" God answers this petition for bread by sending faithful clergy, who supply "this Word daily and abundantly." Luther explains that "daily bread" is given "in two

different ways: first, through words; second, through the Sacrament of the Altar. … In the sacrament Christ is received." Luther goes on to stress the importance of Gospel-centered preaching to accompany the Sacrament, and he says that "faith is nothing else than the eating of this bread.' In his *Personal Prayer Book* (1522) Luther has similar comments:

> This bread is our Lord Jesus Christ who feeds and comforts the soul. Therefore, O heavenly Father, grant grace that the life, words, deeds, and suffering of Christ be preached. … Help us through his death to overcome our own death with a firm faith and thus boldly follow our beloved Guide into the life beyond this one. …
>
> > At our life's end do not let us be deprived of the holy and true body of Christ. Help all priests to administer and use the sacred sacrament worthily and blessedly. … Graciously help us and all other Christians to receive the holy sacrament at the proper time.
> >
> > And in brief, give us our daily bread so that Christ may remain in us eternally and we in him. (CC p. 467)

Exegetical support for a comprehensive understanding like Luther's is at hand in the gospel itself. The order of the Lukan petitions (as compared with the order in Matthew and the Didache) also strengthens the view that "bread" here may include spiritual and eschatological gifts of God as well as earthly and temporal ones. Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer has the three petitions for the kingdom, bread, and forgiveness one right after the other. The kingdom, bread, and forgiveness are three key elements in Jesus' table fellowship. Jesus' meals with sinners are a signal that God's *kingdom* has arrived through him (e.g., Lk 5:27–39). In the setting of such a meal with physical, earthly food, Jesus can extend the *forgiveness* of sins (e.g., 7:36–50). And the miraculous multiplication already now of physical *bread* is a sure sign of the abundance of the messianic age, which has already dawned with the advent of Jesus (9:10–17; cf. Amos 9:13). (CC pp. 467-468)

Two main groups of meanings are possible for ἐπιούσιος, depending on whether the second part (following the preposition ἐπί) derives from the verb εἰμί, "to be," or from εἶμι, "to come, to go." If it is from εἰμί, likely meanings of the phrase would be "bread essential for existence (οὐσία, from εἰμί)" or "bread for the present day (today)," leading to temporal and earthly interpretations of the petition. If the underlying verb is εἶμι, likely meanings of the phrase would be "bread for the following day (tomorrow)" or "bread for a coming day (the more distant future)," leading to interpretations that are more eschatological and other-worldly. For more on these and other possible meanings, see BAGD, 1–4; E. Lohmeyer, *Our Father,* 141–46; S. A. Falcone, "The Kind of Bread We Pray for in the Lord's Prayer"; J. Jeremias, *The Lord's Prayer;* J. J. Petuchowski and M. Brocke, *The Lord's Prayer and Jewish Liturgy;* B. Orchard, "The Meaning of *ton epiousion* (Mt 6:11 = Lk 11:3)"; J. Hennig, "Our Daily Bread"; A. Baker, "What Sort of Bread Did Jesus Want Us to Pray For?" *New Blackfriars* 54 (1973) 125–29; and M. Black, "The Aramaic of *ton arton hemon ton epiousion* (Matt vi.11 = Luke xi.3)." Perhaps the best treatment in depth and clarity is G. Wainwright, *Eucharist and Eschatology,* 30–34. (CC p. 462)

This commentary sees validity in both lines of interpretation. As with the earlier petitions for the hallowing of God's name, the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will, the gospel of Luke portrays the petition for bread as being answered partially here and now, but to be fulfilled completely only in the eschaton. The chosen translation, "our bread for the coming day keep giving to us day by day" seeks to preserve this now/not yet tension of inaugurated eschatology. The petition has more of a forward-looking sense in Luke than in Matthew and the Didache because in Luke the second half is "keep giving [δίδου, present imperative] to us day by day"

(extending into the future), while in Matthew (6:11) and the Didache (8:2) the second half is "give [δός, aorist imperative] to us *today* [σήμερον]." The meaning of "coming day" for ἐπιούσιος is supported by Luke's use of participles of ἔπειμι (ἐπί + εἶμι) to indicate the "next" day and the "next" night (Acts 7:26; 16:11; 20:15; 21:18; 23:11). Luke is the only NT author to employ ἔπειμι. (CC p. 462)

The petition, then, is for bread that is to be received each day in succession in the present era. However, the forward-looking perspective of the petition also anticipates the age to come, when the yearning for bread will be satisfied completely. I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 460, emphasizes the future aspect well, but stresses spiritual food at the expense of earthly food instead of balancing the two: "The petition is then to be understood in the sense 'Give us today the bread which we shall enjoy in the future in the kingdom of God,' and 'bread' is to be understood not merely in terms of material sustenance but primarily (though not exclusively) in terms of spiritual food." Luther interpreted "daily bread" to include the full range of necessities for bodily life in this world, as well as God's provisions that grant spiritual life now and also eternal life in the age to come. (CC p. 463)

- This includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body.

- Give means that it is a gift and not something we deserved or earned and teaches us that God is the sole source

- We say "our" because we should ask for that bread only which is honestly our, and because we should also pray for our neighbor and share with him when he is in need.

- We are to say "daily" and "this day" because we should be satisfied with what we need each day, and because it is foolish and sinful to worry about the future.

- Luke says "each day" and "daily" to teach us that God takes care of us every moment. (Chemnitz p. 64)

- The children of Israel had manna for each day. And their shoes never wore out.

11:4 *Forgive us our sins.* Mt 6:12 has "debts," but the meaning is the same as "sins." Jesus taught this truth on other occasions as well (Mt 18:35; Mk 11:25). The prayer is a pattern for believers, who have already been forgiven for their sins. Jesus speaks here of daily forgiveness, which is necessary to restore broken communion with God. (CSB)

Mt 6:12 has "debts," which has the same sense. *indebted*. Just as our sins indebt us to God, so other people's trespasses cause them to "owe" us. (TLSB)

The release of sins is an important theme in Luke. God's forgiveness is the foundation on which we are certain that our prayer is heard and on which we are enabled to forgive. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 22, Part 3)

- We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, but graciously forgive us for we are worthy of none of the things we pray for and deserve nothing but punishment), for Christ's sake forgive them. In response we will heartily forgive, and readily do good to, to those who sin against us.

- For the flesh in which we daily live is of such a nature that it does not trust and believe God and is constantly aroused by evil desires and devices, so that we sin daily in word and deed, in acts of commission and omission. Thus our conscience becomes restless; it fears God's wrath and displeasure, and so it loses the comfort and confidence of the Gospel. Therefore it is necessary constantly to turn to this petition for the comfort that will restore our conscience. (Book of Concord p. 432)

- In the case of a Christian such repentance continues until death, for all through life it contends with the sins that remain in the flesh. (Book of Concord p. 309)

- The word "forgive" will not allow the thought that it is our payment, our work, or our satisfaction, but only allows forgiveness to be considered as a free gift. The Greeks translate the Hebrew word "forgiving" as "to be gracious, merciful, and pardoning." (Chemnitz p. 70)

- Forgiveness is unconditional or it is not forgiveness at all.

καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν—See comments at 1:77 and 4:18. The forgiveness of sins has been a prominent Lukan theme thus far (e.g., 3:3; 5:17–26; 7:36–50; cf. also 24:47). Luke has "sins" (τὰς ἁμαρτίας) instead of "debts" (τὰ ὀφειλήματα [Mt 6:12]). Perhaps this difference is for clarity, especially in the use of Luke to catechize Gentiles, who might not understand "debts" as a metaphor for "sins." However, Luke uses the financial language of debts in the next phrase (παντὶ ὀφείλοντι). (CC p, 463)

Comments at 1:77 – The prepositional phrase "in the forgiveness of their sins" describes the content of salvation. Forgiveness of sins is a Lukan theme that is first announced here. To give salvation to the world is the essence of the ministries of John and Jesus. Salvation's significance is heightened by its association with the forgiveness of sins. The connection is first made by Luke in the ministry of John the Baptist (Lk 3:3–6). The proclamation of forgiveness reaches fulfillment in the messianic ministry of Jesus. It is a major thrust of the programmatic sermon in 4:16–30. Luke's use of "forgiveness" (ἄφεσις) in 4:18 and 24:47 links together the first and last proclaimed words of Jesus in the gospel and shows that forgiveness is essential to Luke's portrayal of the teaching of Jesus as a proclamation of salvation, *"God's* 'liberation' of men *from sin's bondage"*

Two comments on 4:18 – RELEASE THE OPPRESSED – ἄφεσιν – Release has a wide range of meanings, frequently centering on the sense of forgiveness, and indeed this noun (like the verb from which it is derived, ἀφίημι) often refers specifically to the forgiveness of sins, as in 1:77; 3:3; 24:47. This release comes through the forgiveness of sins that Jesus himself brings. (CC p. 190)

The application of Isaiah 61 to Jesus highlights the essence of his proclamation as "release." The word for "release" (ἄφεσις) is often translated "forgiveness," and indeed in its three other occurrences in Luke (1:77; 3:3; 24:47), it specifically means the forgiveness of sins. Here it is rendered with the more general term "release," meaning liberation from the bondage of sin, sickness, and Satan. At times this will involve physical healing, exorcism, and rebuking destructive forces of nature, in addition to forgiving sins; see comments below on this pericope. *Throughout, this commentary will continue to note how Jesus in his ministry carries out this programmatic fulfillment of prophecy by releasing creation from its bondage to sin and restoring it to its proper state of harmony with the Creator.* (CC pp. 192-193)

In worship, absolution and the table fellowship of the Lord's Supper give further expression to this joining of heaven and earth in Christ. In absolution the human voice announcing forgiveness is at the same time a supernatural and eschatological announcement from Christ himself. In the Sacrament earthly bread is at the same time supernatural and eschatological bread, since according to Jesus' words, the bread is his body. When a catechumen prays for bread according to Jesus' instruction and remembers the recurring significance of bread in Jesus' ministry throughout the gospel, the petitioner would likely include in mind the life-giving bread of the Supper—the God-given bread that is both earthly and heavenly. (CC pp. 468-469)

The forgiveness of sins, next in the Lord's Prayer, balances the petition for bread. Just as bread is the essential staple of physical life, and the Supper provides bread that is both earthly and heavenly, so forgiveness is the essential sustenance of spiritual life, and the need for forgiveness is constant and ongoing, hence Jesus' provision of the Supper as the regular Meal that provides forgiveness. It is only because of forgiveness that fallen humans may call on God as Father, and his kingdom comes through the forgiveness of sins. Jesus' ministry has offered some dramatic examples of the coming of God's kingdom through the forgiveness of sins (e.g., 5:17–26; 7:36–50). In fact, Jesus' programmatic sermon about the purpose of his ministry centered on his mission to bring "release" or "forgiveness" (see comments on ἄφεσις in 4:18–19; cf. also 1:77). Just as "bread" involves both physical and spiritual nourishment, the forgiveness of sins brings release from the physical consequences of sin, as Jesus demonstrated in his healing in 5:17–26. In the Apostles' Creed, the order is deliberate: "the forgiveness of sins" leads to "the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." Disciples who pray the Lord's Prayer may have to wait until the resurrection to experience physical healing, but the promise of that release is as sure as the forgiveness of their sins in Christ. (CC p. 469)

As Jesus moves from life before God to life in relation to other people, he shifts from "forgive" to "owe," or "be in debt," a term commonly used in human commercial and financial transactions. While ἀφίημι (twice in 11:4) is the most common verb that can mean "to forgive" (and the related noun occurs twice for emphasis in Jesus' description of his ministry in 4:18), Jesus also uses the concept of a legal or financial debt metaphorically in some of his parables about forgiveness (e.g., 7:40–43; 16:1–13; cf. also 17:10). Like bread that is both heavenly and earthly, forgiveness involves people's relation both to God and to fellow human beings. Later Luke will provide additional words of Jesus that speak to how his followers are to forgive without limits those who owe them—forgiving frequently (17:3–4) and, following his example, profoundly (23:34). (CC p. 469)

We are constantly forgiving individuals because individuals are constantly in need of forgiveness. It should be obvious from this text and many others in Scripture that what God forgives us is vastly more than what we forgive our fellowmen. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION – εἰς πειρασμόν—On πειρασμός/πειράζω, see 4:2, 13; 8:13; 11:4, 16; 22:28, 40, 46. (CC p. 463)

Both bread and the forgiveness of sins shed light on the final petition: "and do not bring us into temptation" (11:4). The Father who gives all good gifts allows even his Son to be tempted by Satan in the wilderness, and that temptation included the suggestion to put (physical, earthly) bread ahead of the Word of God and to seek worldly glory instead of properly worshiping God alone (4:1–13). Jesus will also speak of Satan's desire to "to sift you [the disciples] as wheat" (22:31). Trials and sufferings come because of the preaching of the kingdom. The disciples will be rejected as Jesus was rejected. This opposition is a given with the coming of the kingdom. In his final teaching following the Lord's Supper, Jesus will tell his disciples that they have shared

in his trials (22:28), and immediately afterward, on the Mount of Olives, he will urge them to "pray not to come into temptation" (22:40; cf. 22:46). To pray not to be led into temptation is to pray not to succumb to that temptation. The disciples are praying that though they are assailed by the devil, the world, and the sinful nature, God would preserve them from falling into apostasy. Taken together, the petitions for bread, for forgiveness, and for keeping them from succumbing to temptation are petitions to help the disciples be kept in the one true, saving faith, so that they "may finally prevail and gain the victory." (CC pp. 469-470)

Implicit in the petition, as Luther points out, is the fact that God indeed temps no one. We acknowledge that God is the gracious Father who governs our life and has the power to lead us safely past all the invitations to sin. There are temptations within us and all around us. They are inevitable. But we pray that none of those will trap us. Jesus was tempted but did not yield. We are tempted but pray that God that we will not yield. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

- There are two meanings to temptation. One is an enticement to evil which only comes from the devil. The other is a testing which comes from God to make us stronger in our faith. In this petition the first is meant.

- The devil uses the following to tempt: (1) when afflictions last long and deliverance is slow in coming. (2) when the misery seems too great, very peculiar, and very strange. (3) when under the goal of doing some great good, he challenges some to try something very dangerous or something beyond their strength and vocation. (4) when he cloaks and covers evil under the name of virtue such as coveting being called guidance, cruelty called justice, pride called bravery, ignorance called simplicity, waste called liberality, and so forth. (5) when he uses peace, quietness, and rest to tempt into a feeling of false security. (Chemnitz p. 82)

- This petition brings to our attention the miserable life that we lead here on earth. It is nothing more than one great trial. He who seeks peace and security here acts unwisely (Road Less Traveled), for he will never find them. We do not say "spare us the trial," but "do not lead us into it." It is as if we were to say, "We are surrounded on all sides by trials and cannot avoid them; however, dear Father, help us so that we do not fall prey to them and yield to them, and thus be overcome and vanquished." (LW – V. 42 p. 71)

- When the Law condemns you, then immediately lay hold upon the Gospel (Walther Law & Gospel p. 45)

- As soon as we notice this, we must quickly lift our eyes to God and pray, "O my God and Father, see how I am being tempted and lured into this or that vice and how I am hindered in doing this or that good work. Defend and help me, dear Father; do not let me succumb and be ensnared. (LW – V 42 p. 72)

- Dear brother, you cannot prevent the birds from flying over your head, but you can certainly keep them from building a nest in your hair. (LW – V 42 p. 73

- Temptation is of three kinds: flesh, world and the devil. Just a few works of the flesh are: unchastity, laziness, gluttony, drunkenness, greed, deceit, acts of fraud and deception. The world assails us with hatred, envy, enmity, violence, injustice, vengeance, cursing, reviling, slander, arrogance and pride along with fondness for luxury, honor, fame and power. The devil especially exerts himself where the conscience and spiritual matters are at stake. His purpose is to make us scorn and despise both the Word and the works of God, to tear us

away from faith, hope and love, draw us into unbelief, false security, and stubbornness, or to drive us into despair, atheism, blasphemy and countless other abominable sins. (Book of Concord pp. 433-34)

11:5–13 Jesus now urged boldness (or persistence; see NIV text note on v. 8) in prayer (vv. 5–8) and gave assurance that God answers prayer (vv. 9–13). The argument is from the lesser to the greater (see v. 13).

11:5 *which of you* – τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν—This phrase introduces a question that will expect a negative answer among the first-century hearers in view of the rules of hospitality: ordinarily, a friend would *not* answer that way. The rhetorical question encompasses 11:5–7. On τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν, see J. Jeremias, *Parables,* 103, 158, who suggests this be translated "Can you imagine that any of you would …" The question in 11:5–7 uses verbs in both the future indicative and the subjunctive. Both are possible in "rhetorical questions of fact having reference to the future" (E. Burton, *Moods and Tenses,* § 169). (CC p. 463)

MIDNIGHT – At this hour, it would be impossible to go out and buy food. (TLSB)

The rules of hospitality in the first century required that the entire community assist in entertaining a midnight guest.

> K. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant,* 122–23, notes that a guest must be served a full loaf or it would be an insult. Enough must be served to give the semblance of a full meal. To entertain a guest at one's home is not only the responsibility of the individual, but of the whole village, even at the unusual hour of midnight. Even if the guest is not hungry, a meal must be set before him. Thus to find bread for the guest at midnight would involve the community, and it would be common knowledge who had recently baked and would have bread. The meal would consist of common dishes, and the bread would be dipped into these dishes and eaten, so that the bread would function as the utensils used to eat the meal. (CC p. 470)

The rhetorical question that opens the parable is a ridiculous one, and the first-century audience would recognize it as such. It would be hard to imagine any member of a village who would refuse the request of someone else in that village who needed to entertain a midnight guest. But even if you were to find someone who was so obdurate, and even if he did offer inane excuses, because of his desire not to be shamed by refusing hospitality, he would get up and supply what was needed for someone else's midnight guest. The catechumen would recognize that Jesus is speaking about the hospitality of God, who, no matter what the circumstances, is honorable and generous, supplying what we need. (CC p. 470)

Marshall suggests: "Can anyone of you imagine that…?" That is worth pondering. Who would do such a thing? It is very striking and most unusual. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

three loaves – In a society where many baked goods were homemade, this was a significant request. (TLKSB)

11:6 *friend of mine* – This was someone close enough to expect hospitality from the one requesting the bread. (TLSB)

11:7 *do not bother me* – Even if the flesh of that person is weak, he will eventually get up and give what is needed. Quilt usually gets the best of most people.

With me in bed – In small dwellings, entire families often slept near one another on the floor. Rising and granting this favor would likely awaken the whole household. (TLSB)

Even if someone were this unhelpful, he would finally help to avoid a bad reputation or at least to silence the neighbor at his door. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 22, Part 3)

The final sentence of this verse means: "I refuse to get up and give you anything." (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

11:8 I*i tell you* – On λέγω ὑμῖν, see comments at 4:24. This expression is repeated in the next verse (11:9), forming a connective between the second and third parts of this passage. (CC p. 463)

Comment on 4:24 – λέγω ὑμῖν—This will be repeated again in 4:25. These two references here in the Nazareth sermon are the first of numerous "I say to you" statements, in which Jesus speaks authoritatively as the enfleshed Word of God. Oftentimes, they are concentrated in a single discourse (see Lk 12:1–13:9 where it is used ten times). In Luke, this expression is often spoken by Jesus. (CC p. 191)

give him – αὐτῷ … αὐτοῦ … αὐτοῦ—The antecedent of αὐτῷ is the person who is asking for bread. The subject of δώσει is the man in bed, who has also been called "friend" of the man who is asking (11:5). Thus in 11:8, "friend" is probably the man in bed and the antecedent of the αὐτοῦ with it is the man who is asking. The antecedent of the third αὐτοῦ (with ἀναίδειαν) is probably also the man who is asking, but it could be the man who is in bed. It depends on the interpretation of ἀναίδειαν. (CC p. 463)

his imprudence – τὴν ἀναίδειαν—The interpretation of the parable depends largely on the understanding of this word. "Lack of shame" comes close to preserving the ambiguity between "impudence, shamelessness" (BAGD) and "avoidance of shame" (see K. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, 125–33). In the first case, it is a feature of the behavior of the man who is asking. In the second case, it is a characteristic of the friend inside the house who is being asked to assist in showing hospitality to a visitor—something that is a matter of honor according to the oriental hospitality code. (See also comments below at 18:1–18 and 20:9–19.) (CC pp. 463-464)

Fahling says: "With this shameless disregard of his neighbor's private comfort and apparent indifference the importunate disturber succeeded in gaining his end." Of course, the parable is no way means that we should act rudely and shamefully toward God. So deeply did friend #1 feel a need that, disregarding the situation of friend #2, he persisted until he acquired what he needed. (Exegetical Notes – Buls)

The Greek is anaideia which literally means "shamelessness" or "above reproach." Rather than acting shamefully by failing to help his persistent friend, the man in the house will actually give more than his friend asked. (TLSB)

whatever he needs – More than what he asked for. God operates on a different level and will first of all be glad to hear our petition and also be quick to respond with all that we need some of which he may not even have determined.

He only asked for three loaves (v. 5), but the man gives according to his need. This appears to emphasize that need drives prayer. "[Through this parable,] Jesus reveals to us a God whom we

can bother, who welcome His children's importunity" (Martin Franzmann, Concordia Self-Study Commentary [St. Louis: Concordia, 1971, 1979] 69). And our God never slumbers or sleeps (Ps. 121:4). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 22, Part 3)

11:9-10 Aug: "Let then the slothfulness of men be put to shame; He is more willing to give, than we to receive; He is more willing to show mercy, than we to be delivered from misery" (*NPNF* 1 6:431). (TLSB)

11:9 *I tell you* – Jesus is urging a boldness in our prayer life.

ASK – αἰτεῖτε—This is a synonym for petitionary prayer (προσεύχομαι). The Lord's Prayer is first and foremost a petitionary prayer in which the disciples are taught how to petition or ask the Father for their needs. This word will be used at 11:10, 11, 12, and 13. (CC p. 464)

SEEK…KNOCK – ζητεῖτε … κρούετε—Seeking and knocking are also used by Jesus for those who desire entrance into the kingdom of God to sit with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the messianic table (13:24–28). (CC p. 464)

11:10 *everyone* – Believers. (TLSB)

11:11-13 By using rhetorical questions to characterize the kindness of human fathers, Jesus heightens the contrast between the earthly parents and God the Father, whose goodness is infinite. Note how this passage reinforces the point of the parable in vv 5–8. *give the Holy Spirit*. The best gift of all. "The Holy Spirit dwells in the elect, who have become believers, as in His temple" (FC SD XI 73). *ask Him!* Jesus concludes this teaching by urging us to ask for that which God wants to give. (TLSB)

11:11-12 *fish/snake...egg/scorpion* – ἰχθύος/ὄφιν, ᾠόν/σκορπίον—Mt 7:9 has bread/stone, fish/snake. Luke's fish/snake, egg/scorpion recalls 10:19, where the seventy (-two) have been given "authority to tread on snakes and scorpions." Some Lukan manuscripts have three pairs, i.e., bread/stone, fish/snake, and egg/scorpion, but this is no doubt an attempt to coordinate Matthew and Luke. K. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, 136–37, argues for all three and, in citing I. Sa'id, *Sharh Bisharat Luqa* (Beirut: Near East Council of Churches, 1970) 303, offers a fascinating explanation why Jesus uses these various pairs: "Bread, fish, and eggs are the ordinary food of a common man. … A round stone looks like a round loaf (Luke 4:3), and there is little outward difference between the snake of the sea which is kind of fish and a snake of the land which is an ordinary snake … and the scorpion all folded up looks like an egg." The point of all these contrasts is that the Father certainly will give good gifts, not evil representations of the devil. (CC p. 464)

11:13 *who are evil* – This little phrase teaches our fallen nature. Even fathers who give good things to their children are evil. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 22, Part 3)

The final section (11:9–13) affirms what the parable taught, namely, that God is a giver of good gifts (cf. Mt 7:11, "good things"). But it also urges persistence on the part of the petitioner, heightened by the parallelism in the structure. Why should the disciples ask, seek, and knock? Because God is not hard to rouse or reluctant to give (cf. Lk 11:7; 1 Ki 18:16–46). He is eager to give (Deut 30:9). If human fathers give good gifts, even if they are evil men, "how much more the Father from heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him" (Lk 11:13). This is the same Holy Spirit who rested upon Mary at the moment of Jesus' conception and on Jesus at his baptism, who led Jesus into the wilderness and rested on him as he preached in Nazareth. And

now, for the first time, the disciples are told that the Father will give to them too this same Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will be promised again by Jesus to his disciples after the resurrection and will be given to them at Pentecost. Thus the Trinity comes to the disciples as a gift: through the Son, they call God "Father" and receive the Spirit (cf. Rom 8:15, 23). (CC p. 471)

give the Holy Spirit. Mt 7:11 has "give good gifts," meaning spiritual gifts. Luke emphasizes the work of the Spirit, the greatest of God's gifts. (CSB)

If fathers who are evil give good things to their children, then most certainly the perfect Father is in heaven will give the greatest gift: the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit we cannot believe in Christ or have forgiveness and eternal life. See Luther's explanations of the Third Article and of the Second Petition in the Small Catechism. See alaos Romans 8:12-16; Galatians 3:1-5, 13-14. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 22, Part 3)

Jesus' reference to the Holy Spirit at this point helps explain why the Lord's Prayer became part of the church's baptismal and eucharistic liturgies. In fact, the Lord's Prayer could be called "the catechumen's prayer," for this is how one is instructed to pray in preparation for Baptism and Eucharist. When one learns to pray the Lord's Prayer, one learns how God has established his hospitality with us in his name and his kingdom and how we respond to this welcoming God by petitioning him for those things that we need to keep us faithful and from falling into unbelief. When one prays, one enters into a relationship of hospitality where God is the giver of all things and the petitioner is the recipient of the gift of his Holy Spirit. By that Spirit's power God's kingdom comes among us as we "believe his holy Word and live a godly life, both here in time and hereafter forever." That Holy Spirit keeps the whole Christian church on earth "with Jesus Christ in the one true faith," and in that church "he daily and abundantly forgives all my sins, and the sins of all believers." The grand promise—that the good Father gives the Holy Spirit through Jesus—assures a gracious answer to every prayer. (CC p. 471)

11:1–13 Jesus teaches that Christian prayers are unfailingly heard because God has promised to hear us, and He always keeps His promises. Were prayer to depend on us, we could never be sure of God's response, because sin corrupts completely. We can depend on God to keep His promise to hear us and answer us because He never breaks His word. Prayer is a blessed opportunity granted by the Gospel. • "What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry Ev'rything to God in prayer! Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh, what needless pain we bear—All because we do not carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!" Amen. (*LSB* 770:1) (TLSB)

Jesus and Beelzebub

14 Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. 15 But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons," 16 while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven. 17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. 18 And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. 19 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. 20 But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 21 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; 22 but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his

spoil. 23 Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

The previous pericope (11:1–13) recorded a private conversation between Jesus and his disciples. Now the audience switches to the crowds, who appear throughout this pericope at the beginning of various sections (11:14, 27, 29). At first they are amazed at Jesus' exorcism (11:14), then some of the crowd accuse him of driving out demons by Beelzebul (11:15) and test him by asking for a sign (11:16). A woman in the crowd raises her voice to bless Jesus (11:27). In the final sections, the crowds gathered around Jesus (11:29a) hear his warning about this evil generation (11:29b–32) and his admonition to have a clear eye in order that the whole body may be illuminated (11:33–36). (CC p. 475)

11:14 *demon that was mute.* This evil spirit caused muteness. The probable parallel passage in Matthew (12:22–30; see also Mk 3:20–27) indicates that the man was also blind. (CSB)

Not every case of demon possession had the same symptoms. In this case, the demon caused the man to be mute. (TLSB)

people marveled – ἐθαύμασαν οἱ ὄχλοι—At the beginning of this pericope, the crowds marvel at Jesus. In the final passage of this section (11:37–54), Luke reports that a Pharisee marvels that Jesus does not wash his hands before eating (11:38), so that 11:14–36 is framed by references to reactions of amazement at Jesus. (CC p. 473)

11:15 Note that a similar accusation was laid against John the Baptist (7:33). (TLSB)

Beelzebub, the prince of demons. Satan (v. 18). See note on Mt 10:25. (CSB)

Βεελζεβούλ—To attribute Jesus' power to Beelzebul is to blaspheme Jesus and the Holy Spirit, with whom he was anointed in baptism and by whose power he works his miracles. Jews would hear the suggestion as accusing Jesus of apostasy in the strongest possible terms. This is the only occurrence of Beelzebul in Luke, and as 11:18 indicates, the name designates Satan. The name means "prince Baal." It reflects an ancient Canaanite epithet, found in the fourteenth-century B.C. Ugaritic texts, for Baal, the male fertility god worshiped by the nations God drove out before Israel: Baal is called *zbl b'l 'arts*, "prince, lord of earth." At various times in Israel's history many apostatized and worshiped Baal. Since Baal was often represented as a bull, the gold bulls erected in Bethel and Dan likely were associated with Baal (1 Ki 12:28–30), and the false worship of them was the major sin that split the faith of the Northern Kingdom from that of the Southern Kingdom (e.g., 2 Ki 10:28–29). Therefore, Baal helped rend Israel as a "kingdom divided up against itself," and both kingdoms eventually were desolated because of their apostasy. In intertestamental literature, both Beelzebul and Belial are names for the devil. Cf. I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 473; J. Fitzmyer, *Luke X–XXIV*, 920–21. (CC p. 473)

11:16 *to test him* – πειράζοντες—Just as Satan put Jesus to the test in the temptations in the wilderness (4:2, 13), so now some in the crowd are carrying out Satan's work by questioning Jesus' power over demons and seeking a sign. After Jesus' temptations in the wilderness, the same thing happened when the skeptical people of Nazareth were seeking to see him perform miracles. The disciples were just taught in the Lord's Prayer to ask, "Do not bring us into temptation" (11:4). The theme of temptation connects these first two pericopes of Luke 11. (CC p. 473)

Though Luke does not give particulars, people were demanding that Jesus prove His credentials. (TLSB)

a sign from heaven. Jesus had just healed a mute. Here was their sign, and they would not recognize it. (CSB)

A miracle authenticating that Jesus came from God, not Satan. (TLSB)

σημεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐζήτουν παρ’ αὐτοῦ—See below at 11:29, where Jesus says that an evil generation seeks a sign. His power over Satan in this passage is all the sign the people should need. (CC p. 473)

The second challenge was the demand for a sign from Jesus (11:16). This is ironic, because the casting out of a demon from a deaf-mute is an unmistakably clear sign that Jesus is the final, eschatological prophet greater than Moses. The crowds must have sensed that Jesus could be this prophet, since “the crowds were pressing together” around him (11:29). But like Satan (4:1–13), they wish to put him to the test: he should perform a sign to satisfy them. When confronted by the testimony of Jesus’ teaching and miracles, they confront Jesus in hostility. They want to judge instead of being judged by those who repented and believed God’s miracles (11:31–32). (CC p. 481)

11:17 *knowing their thoughts* – εἰδὼς αὐτῶν τὰ διανοήματα—Jesus’ omniscience is a recurring theme in Luke (5:22; 6:8; 9:46–47; 24:38). The response of people to Jesus reveals their thoughts, in fulfillment of Simeon’s prophecy (2:35). (CC p. 474)

Jesus knew His adversaries’ criticisms, and so He addresses them straightaway. (TLSB)

kingdom divided against itself. If Satan gave power to Jesus, who opposed him in every way, Satan would be supporting an attack upon himself. (CSB)

Apparently, a proverbial saying. (TLSB)

οἶκος ἐπὶ οἶκον πίπτει—There are three possible meanings for the expression “house falls on house”: (1) every household that is against household (against itself) will fall, i.e., every household divided against itself falls; (2) house falls upon house, i.e., one house attacks another; (3) house after house collapses, i.e., as each house in succession is divided, it eventually falls apart. Probably the best understanding is the first one, which is parallel to the preceding thought in the verse, “every kingdom divided up against itself is desolated.” Cf. I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 474, and J. Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34*, 638. (CC p. 474)

household – οἶκος—The Twelve and the seventy (-two) are sent to houses (9:4; 10:5–7). The earliest Christian communities are in houses, and those earliest congregations celebrated the Lord’s Supper in houses (Acts 2:46; 20:7–8). (See the section “House Churches” in the introduction.) Thus, “house falls on house” may suggest the divisions among Christian house churches that amount to a civil war. Just as false worship divided and ultimately destroyed OT Israel (see textual note on 11:15), so also church history bears witness that syncretism, unionism, and other aberrations in worship cause divisions and factions. (CC p. 474)

11:18 *if Satan also is divided*. Satan, who holds great sway over fallen humans, is depicted as “ruler of this world” (Jn 12:31; cf Col 1:13). (TLSB)

11:19 *by whom do your sons … ?* Jesus did not say whether the followers of the Pharisees (see Mt 12:24) actually drove out demons; but they claimed to drive them out by the power of God, and Jesus claimed the same. So to accuse Jesus of using Satanic power was implicitly to condemn their own followers as well. (CSB)

your judges. They will condemn you for your accusation against them. (CSB)

By blaspheming Jesus, His adversaries called all who exorcise demons into question. For such false teaching, Jesus' opponents will be judged on the Last Day. (TLSB)

The choice here is clearly between Satan and God. Jesus challenges his accusers to think about their own relationship to the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. After all, there are other Jewish exorcists, some of whom even use the name of Jesus (9:49; Acts 19:13–17). If Jesus is accused of casting out demons by Beelzebul, then such accusations should be leveled against these others as well. Other exorcists would know that Jesus' actions are by the power of God, and so they will act as judges over those who blaspheme Jesus. (CC p. 478)

11:20 *by finger of God* – The conclusion of the second alternative is the central point of Jesus' response. If Jesus casts out demons by the finger of God, then he is the new and greater prophet like Moses who brings with him the kingdom of God. The finger of God (ἐν δακτύλῳ θεοῦ) is a reference to Ex 8:19, where Pharaoh's magicians confess that Moses and Aaron are performing miracles by "the finger of God." Jesus here lays claim to be carrying on the tradition of Moses, whose miracles demonstrated that he was present to free Israel from bondage by "the finger of God." God's liberating power is at work through the exorcisms Jesus performs, which are evidence and signs that God's kingdom has come. Jesus' statement that "the kingdom of God has come upon you" (11:20) means he is the final, eschatological prophet promised by Moses in Deut 18:15–20. (CC p. 478)

the kingdom of God has come. In the sense that the King was present in the person of Jesus (see note on 4:43) and that the powers of evil were being overthrown. (CSB)

Jesus advances the kingdom of God by defeating the occupying forces of Satan and his minions. (TLSB)

ἄρα ἔφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ—The aorist of φθάνω is ingressive; the kingdom of God has come upon them already through Jesus, who casts out demons. The phrase is a statement of inaugurated eschatology; see 11:2 and the kingdom petition in the Lord's Prayer. Jesus says the kingdom has come "upon *you*" (ἐφ' ὑμᾶς)—on the very ones who hear his words and witness his exorcisms. (CC p. 474)

11:21 *strong man*. (TLSB)

own palace. Satan's stronghold is the human heart, where he exerts great influence. (TLSB)

11:22 *one stronger... attacks.* Jesus was stronger than Beelzebub, and by his exorcism of demons he demonstrated that he had overpowered Satan and disarmed him. It was therefore foolish to suggest that Jesus had cast out demons by Satan's power. (CSB)

To illustrate the consequences of this proclamation of the kingdom's presence, Jesus presents the two alternatives in even starker terms. He refers back to the prophecy of John the Baptist, which

uses the same Greek word to describe Jesus as the one "more powerful than I" (ἰσχυρότερός μου; Lk 3:16). Now Jesus refers to himself as the "stronger one" (ἰσχυρότερος; 11:22), while Satan is the "strong one" (ἰσχυρός; 11:21). The battle imagery here reminds the hearer of the battle between Jesus and the devil during the wilderness temptations. Jesus has already demonstrated his power over Satan when, with the Word of God, he overcame the devil's suggestions that he bypass the cross. Jesus will complete his mission and achieve the final victory over Satan. Already now Jesus is taking hold of the spoils of war, liberating captives from the possession of Satan. In this way Jesus is fulfilling the magnificent prophecy of the Isaian Suffering Servant Songs. The fourth song (Is 52:13–53:12) concludes with the Father's promise that because the Servant will pour out his life as a sin offering on behalf of the people, he will be victorious: "Therefore, I will divide [spoil] to him with the many, and with numerous others he will divide spoil" (Is 53:12). (CC pp. 478-479)

Those who hear Jesus' words and see his actions are confronted with two alternatives: either Jesus acts on behalf of the strong one, Beelzebul, or Jesus himself is the stronger one prophesied by Isaiah and by John the Baptist. The hearer will head toward either falling or resurrection as Simeon prophesied (Lk 2:34). Jesus says it this way: "The one who is not with me is against me, and the one who does not gather with me scatters" (11:23). The hearer cannot maintain a neutral position in relation to Jesus. At this stage in the narrative Jesus' challengers are aware of his claim to exorcise as the messianic prophet who ushers in the kingdom of God and gathers the flock. They must also realize that he will consider those who resist his efforts to gather the flock to be false shepherds who scatter the flock. The introduction of the shepherd imagery seems abrupt, but in view of Jesus' claims to be the Messiah to restore Israel, he also makes claim here to be Israel's shepherd who creates and maintains Israel as his flock. The OT prophets made abundant use of the shepherd metaphor, both for true prophets who gather and for false prophets who scatter the flock, and for those familiar with the OT background the image needs little introduction. (CC p. 479)

armor. Metaphor for Satan's great power. (TLSB)

11:23 Neutrality is not an option. One is either with Jesus and against Satan, or with Satan and against Jesus. (TLSB)

ὁ μὴ ὢν μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ κατ᾽ ἐμοῦ ἐστιν—Contrast this saying with that in 9:50: "For whoever is not against you is for you" (ὃς γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν καθ᾽ ὑμῶν, ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐστιν). The changes in the personal pronouns and in the contexts are the key to reconciling the two verses. This verse (11:23) has to do with acceptance or rejection of Jesus ("me"). The saying in 9:50 is guidance for Jesus' followers in assessing the relationship between themselves ("you") and others who also serve in the name of Jesus, and who therefore are also "for" Jesus and "for" his disciples. In 9:50 the third party ("whoever") was casting out demons in Jesus' name, doing the work of God's kingdom, so he was "for" Jesus and "for" his disciples. But here the third party ("the one who") refers to those in the crowds who accuse Jesus of being in league with Satan and those skeptics who demand a miracle (11:15–16); "the one who" could even refer to Satan, referred to in the preceding verse (11:22), since *Satan is the one who divides and scatters the church, while Jesus works to gather and unite the church.*

gather. Harvest. Cf 10:2. (TLSB)

11:14–23 Jesus responds to accusations that He performs exorcisms by Satan's power. He points out just how self-defeating that would be. Sadly, however, people continue to misunderstand Jesus. They place themselves in an equally self-defeating position when they listen to and follow Satan. What good news, then, to hear that Jesus has overcome the devil and opened God's

kingdom to all who hear His Word and follow Him. • Lord, Your Son has overcome even sin, death, and the devil for us. Lead us to abide in Him steadfastly until the end. Amen. (TLSB)

Return of an Unclean Spirit

24 "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' 25 And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. 26 Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first."

11:24-26 In the final section of Jesus' extended response to the accusation that he casts out demons through Beelzebul, Jesus implies that when Satan is cast out, the void must be filled with the Messiah, the stronger one, or else Satan will return with even more force and vehemence. The human soul is pictured as a house that needs an occupant—and if it is left empty, an undesirable tenant will take up residence. This picture supports Augustine's view that all people have a God-shaped void within that only God can fill satisfactorily. Attempts to leave it vacant or to fill it with something else will fail, and in fact the person will be worse off in the end. (CC p. 479)

At the center of 11:24–26 is the decision of the unclean spirit to return to its original house. Framing that is the unclean spirit's leaving and not finding a place (11:24a), then returning and finding a place (11:25). A catechumen is brought to faith and instructed in the Word. He is "exorcised"—transposed from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light—in Holy Baptism, which traditionally includes a renunciation of the devil and his works. Jesus' warning reinforces to the Christian the necessity of remaining in faith, that the indwelling of Christ and his Spirit may continue. If Satan is merely cast out but not replaced with the indwelling Messiah, then the person's condition will be even worse when Satan overwhelms him and haunts his house with even more demons. Granted, not all unbelievers are possessed by demons in the strict sense of being indwelt by them, and there may be many kinds of demonic influence on both unbelievers and believers. However, all who are outside the household of God are in the dominion of Satan, and that is the reason for the renunciation of the devil in the baptismal liturgy. There is no neutrality (11:23). In a world where demons roam, there are no empty houses. (CC pp. 479-480)

While Jesus' house analogy refers to individual persons, the same would apply to houses of worship, and the first hearers of Luke's gospel would likely make such a connection because the house church was the predominate worship setting (see textual note on 11:17 and commentary below on 11:33). Just as there is no neutrality toward Jesus (11:23), so there is no neutrality in worship: the object of true worship is God; the object of false worship is the devil. While Christians know that pagan sacrifices are to gods that do not exist (1 Cor 10:19), nevertheless, "what they sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. … You are not able to drink the Cup of the Lord and a cup of demons; you are not able to partake of the Table of the Lord and a table of demons" (1 Cor 10:20–21). Syncretism and unionism are contrary to two themes of our text because such practices "provoke the Lord to jealousy" and "we are not stronger than he, are we?" (1 Cor 10:22; cf. putting Jesus to the test in Lk 11:16 and the "stronger one" in 11:22). A house of worship that claims to honor God but has no room for Christ is in fact a "synagogue of Satan" (Rev 2:9; 3:9). Like every person, every house of worship has its occupant—either Christ or Beelzebul. (CC p. 480)

11:24 *evil spirit has gone out.* Jesus is perhaps referring to the work of Jewish exorcists, who claimed to cast out demons (cf. v. 19) but who rejected the kingdom of God and whose exorcisms were therefore ineffective. See Mt 12:43–45, where Jesus makes a similar comment about the Jewish nation of that day. (CSB)

In Holy Baptism we traditionally include a renunciation of the devil and his works. Jesus' warning reinforces to the Christian the necessity of remaining in faith, that the indwelling of Christ and His Spirit may continue. If Satan is merely cast out but not replaced with the indwelling Messiah, then the person's condition will be even worse when Satan overwhelms him and haunts his house with even more demons. (CC)

passes through waterless places – διέρχεται δι' ἀνύδρων τόπων—In the temptation of Jesus by the devil (4:1–13), the hearer has already noted that the desert is a place where Satan dwells. In a desert there are no human beings where a demon could find a resting place.

seeking rest. An image emphasizing the desperation demons feel as they search for another person to possess. (TLSB)

house. The person who formerly had the demon. (TLSB)

11:25 *finds the house swept and put in order* – The place had been cleaned up but left unoccupied. A life reformed but lacking God's presence is open to re-occupancy by evil. (CSB)

Evil spirits brought chaos and destruction when they possessed a person. Once liberated of that possession, however, the person behaved normally (cf 8:35). (TLSB)

11:26 *seven* – ἑπτά—Seven represents the fullness of the old order of things as is manifested in those who question Jesus' authority to cast out demons. When a demon is cast out, he must be replaced by Jesus, who destroys the power of Satan in his resurrection on Sunday, the eighth eschatological day. If Jesus is not present or his presence is denied, then the old will come rushing in with a vengeance and it will be worse than before the exorcism. (CC pp. 474-475)

More than one demon can possess a single person. (TLSB)

last...first – ἔσχατα … πρώτων—The neuter plurals stand for "days" or "circumstances"; cf. LXX Job 8:7. The terms could also be used as comparatives: "the later [conditions] … the former [conditions]." (CC p. 475)

After the second possession. "He also will punish those who willfully turn away from the holy commandment and again entangle themselves in the world's filth (2 Peter 2:20–21), decorate their hearts for Satan (Luke 11:24–26), and despise God's Spirit (Hebrews 10:29)" (FC SD XI 83). (TLSB)

11:24–26 A person healed of demon possession could fall into such trouble again. Thus, it is a grave mistake to imagine that we can receive the Gospel, come to Jesus, and yet continue in destructive ways and return to our sins. Thankfully, God promises to fill those who repent with His own Spirit and bless us through His Word and Sacraments, that we may be whole. • "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest, And make our hearts Your place of rest; Come with Your grace and heav'nly aid, And fill the hearts which You have made." Amen. (*LSB* 499:1) (TLSB)

True Blessedness

27 As he said these things, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts at which you nursed!" 28 But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

11:27-28 The point of Jesus' response is clear: the kingdom has arrived in him, as the exorcisms show. God is present in him. But even after the exorcism, some refuse to let Jesus into their house. Some individuals shut out the Christ, and some houses of worship refuse to honor God through Christ and become "synagogue[s] of Satan" (Rev 2:9; 3:9). Jesus "is destined for the fall and resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign spoken against … in order that the thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed" (2:34–35). (CC p. 480)

The house that is cleaned and swept after Beelzebul is expelled must be occupied by the one who rehabilitated it: Jesus. That indwelling happens through Baptism and catechesis, through hearing the Word of God and keeping it. The Word of Christ, which he entrusts to his disciples, has already been shown to defeat Satan and cast him out, as in the ministry of the seventy (-two) (10:17–20). Jesus confirms that he is the stronger one when he says: "I was watching Satan falling like lightning from heaven" (10:18). (CC pp. 480)

The pair of beatitudes in 11:27–28 are part of the Christological Word motif in Luke and raise the teaching of Jesus to a new level. (See the excursus "The Lukan Beatitudes.") The first beatitude recalls Mary's canticle in 1:48: "For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed." As the one who bears the flesh of Christ, Mary is blessed. Jesus does not deny the truth of the beatitude spoken by the woman from the crowd; he adds to her words. For Mary's true blessedness comes from the reason extolled in the second beatitude, spoken by Jesus: "Rather, blessed those who hear the Word of God and keep it." Mary humbly submitted herself in obedience to God's miraculous presence in her body by declaring: "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me *according to your word*" (1:38). Mary heard the word of the angel and she believed it. The hearer now also recalls Jesus' statement (immediately following the parable of the sower) that his true mother and brothers "are those who hear the Word of God and do it" (8:21). Membership within the community does not come from blood (3:8; the old kinship laws) but by faith, i.e., from hearing the Word of God and keeping it. This reiterates what the catechumen has already learned from the Sermon on the Plain (6:47). The hearing of the Word and the keeping of the Word are the fundamentals of catechesis. Through the Word the demons are cast out, and Christ takes up residence in the heart through faith created by the Word. The Word (teaching) of Jesus bestows the blessings of which he speaks. (CC p. 481)

11:27 It is noteworthy that a woman speaks this blessing, because women did not ordinarily begin a conversation with a man they did not know. (TLSB)

11:28 Jesus does not reject this woman's praise of His mother but rather directs attention to the blessedness of receiving the life-giving Gospel, in accord with His Father's mission. (TLSB)

hear the word of God and keep it – οἱ ἀκούοντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ φυλάσσοντες— The emphasis of φυλάσσω, "to keep," is "hold fast to, trust, cherish, keep on believing" the Word, as also in 18:21. The idea is the same as "doing" (ποιέω) the Word in 6:47; 8:21. These expressions reflect the Hebrew שָׁמַר in the many passages in the Torah that urge Israel to remain in faith, keep on believing and following God's revelation. On ἀκούω as a term for catechumens, see comments at 5:1; the Sermon on the Plain (6:27, 47, 49); the parable of the sower (8:8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18); and Jesus' discussion of the new kinship (8:21). This verse is a beatitude; see the excursus "The Lukan Beatitudes." (CC p. 475)

11:27–28 Jesus teaches that hearing His Word and faithfully putting it into practice heaps praise on Him. He continually extends His Word and unfailingly delivers the blessings it promises. •

Lord, help me not only to hear Your Word but also to keep it in a pure heart and thereby produce a fruitful life of service. Amen. (TLSB)

The Sign of Jonah

29 When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, "This generation is an evil generation. It seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah. 30 For as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be to this generation. 31 The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. 32 The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

11:29 Many people flocked to Jesus simply because of the miracles He was performing. (TLSB)

asks for a miraculous sign. On several occasions Jews asked for miraculous signs (v. 16; Mt 12:38; Mk 8:11), but Jesus rejected their requests because they had wrong motives. (CSB)

Jesus criticized the people because they refused to recognize His messianic status and dignity. (TLSB)

Jesus gives them a stern warning: if they seek a sign, they already show themselves to be an "evil generation." "This generation" is repeated four times in these four verses (11:29–32; also twice in 11:50–51). It characterizes a *kind* of people: unbelieving and perverse (9:41), rejecting John and Jesus (7:29–34). Those characteristics, true of all children of Adam since the fall, are especially visible in Luke's narrative in the Jewish religious establishment and their followers. Jesus' words about the Pharisees and lawyers epitomizes them: they "rejected the plan of God for themselves, not being baptized by [John]" (7:30). This evil generation is not content to accept the signs right before their eyes: John the Baptist and now Jesus. Repeatedly through his teaching and miracles, Jesus has shown that he is the final, eschatological prophet, but this evil generation has not heard the Word of God nor kept it. (CC pp. 481-482)

11:30 *as Jonah* became *a sign.* Jonah spent three days "buried" in the huge fish, just as Jesus would be buried for three days before his resurrection. (CSB)

The resurrection; just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and emerged alive, so also Jesus would lie in the belly of the earth for three days and then rise again. (TLSB)

a sign to the people of Nineveh. Jonah warned the Ninevites about God's judgment, and God brought them to repentance. Like Jonah, Jesus warned of judgment and called for repentance. (TLSB)

As God gave to Israel the sign of Jonah's resuscitation after three days and his preaching to the Ninevites, so now God gives "this generation" the sign of preaching—first of John and then of the Son of Man, who confirms his preaching with miracles in preparation for his resurrection on the third day. (CC p. 482)

11:31–32 *one greater than Solomon … one greater than Jonah.* Jesus argued from the lesser to the greater. If the queen of Sheba responded positively to the wisdom of Solomon, and the men of

Nineveh to the preaching of Jonah, how much more should the people of Jesus' day have responded to the ministry of Jesus, who is infinitely greater than Solomon or Jonah! (CSB)

When Jesus refers to Solomon and Jonah, he gives an urgent warning to the listening crowds.

> Luke places Solomon first and Jonah second, while Matthew (12:40–42) has the reverse order. The order here in Luke is chronological. The crowds have already come to hear Jesus, as the queen of the south came "to hear the wisdom of Solomon" (Lk 11:31). Now Jesus desires them to respond in the same way as the Ninevites, who *repented* at Jonah's *preaching* (κήρυγμα, kerygma). Jesus' preaching aimed to bring them to repentance, that is, sorrow for their sin and faith in his redemption. The Hebrew construction of Jonah 3:5 indicates that the Ninevites did more than believe the factuality of Jonah's preaching; "*they believed in God.*" This indicates saving faith. The queen of the south also responded in faith. 1 Ki 10:6–9 records her confession of faith in Yahweh, the God of Israel, including a double *beatitude* about the blessedness of Solomon's hearers (1 Ki 10:8) and a *blessing* of praise to Yahweh himself on account of his eternal love (1 Ki 10:9). The double beatitude and the blessing link that pericope to this text of Luke with its pair of beatitudes in 11:27–28. But unlike the woman in the crowd in Lk 11:27, the queen of the south understood the highest kind of blessedness (Lk 11:28) and its source—the eternal love of God. (CC p. 482)

The sage king and the prophet both spoke the Word to Gentiles who heard and believed. Jesus is Wisdom incarnate, the very source of Solomon's renowned wisdom: "greater than Solomon is here" (11:31). Jesus is also the final eschatological prophet: "greater than Jonah is here" (11:32). If Solomon and Jonah brought Gentiles to repentance and faith, how much more should Jesus' preaching bring all Israel to repentance and faith. *Jesus is the sign to "this generation."* He "is destined for the fall and resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign spoken against … in order that the thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed" (2:34–35). (CC p. 482)

11:31 *The Queen of the South.* The queen of Sheba. (CSB)

The queen of Sheba showed greater respect for Solomon—an earthly king—than many in Jesus' generation showed for the Son of God. Thus, her example puts the behavior of Jesus' adversaries to shame, and she was a Gentile! (TLSB)

ends of the earth. Far away. Sheba was likely located in southwestern Arabia. (TLSB)

something greater than Solomon is here. Both Solomon and Jesus were sons of David and famously wise. Jesus, however, exceeds Solomon, for He is the Messiah and Savior of the world. (TLSB)

CAME…LISTEN – ἀκοῶσαι—An infinitive of purpose, "in order to hear." She *heard and believed* the preaching of Solomon; she was one of those who kept the Word, and Jesus pronounced such persons "blessed" in 11:28. The Christological "wisdom" preached by Solomon and believed by the queen of the south will render her accepted on Judgment Day, in contrast to the evil men of this generation. Christ himself is the "wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1:18–25). The queen became a catechumen; on ἀκούω with this nuance, see references in the textual note on 11:28 above. (CC p. 475)

11:32 *repented*. Another example of Gentiles showing greater righteousness and devotion than God's covenant people. (CSB)

something greater than Jonah is here. Jesus speaks of Himself. Both His person and the work of His kingdom far surpassed the person and work of Jonah. (TLSB)

11:29–32 Jesus contrasts the stubborn unbelief of His own people with Gentiles who believed God's Word and turned to Him in repentance. Such unfavorable comparisons remind us that, though we enjoy the privilege of being called God's people today, we can certainly lose our salvation by turning away from the Lord. Happily, the One who called us is faithful. He will lead us to repentance and see us through to life eternal. • "O blessed Jesus, by Your own blood You have purchased for Yourself a church here upon earth. Make me truly sensible of the honor You have done me, in making me a member of Your church, and admitting me by my Baptism into the participation of all those blessings You have bestowed upon it. Amen." (Ger, *TLWA*, p 275). (TLSB)

The Light in You

33 "No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. 34 Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. 35 Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness. 36 If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light."

11:33-36 The words of 11:33–36 sound familiar. A similar saying appeared in the context of the parable of sower: "And no one, after lighting a lamp, covers it with a vessel or places it under a bed, but places it on a lampstand, in order that those journeying in might see the light" (8:16). The lamp represents the light of the Gospel, which shines through Jesus and his preaching. It will also shine through his church, consisting of those who have been catechized and baptized—those blessed who hear the Word and keep it (11:28). They are not to hide this light. Rather, when those who have been journeying come to enter their house (the house church), those already in the church are to illuminate the house for the sake of those entering. Those journeying would include those who are being converted to the Christian faith; the Word of Jesus is bringing them out from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, out of kingdom of Beelzebul into the kingdom of God (11:17–20). Those journeying would also include those who are already Christians, who are journeying through life with Jesus toward Jerusalem, from Baptism to death and resurrection. The Gospel light is for both evangelization and strengthening the faithful. Illumination involves the interpretation of God's Word within the community of the baptized who gather in the house church for worship and catechesis. (On the house church, cf. textual notes on 11:17 and comments above on houses of worship). Illumination also includes speaking the Word in every context of life in which the Christian encounters others who still walk in darkness. (CC pp. 482-483)

Jesus expands the metaphor here at the conclusion of this section: "The lamp of the body is your eye. When your eye is clear, your whole body too is illuminated." The light shines regardless of whether a person perceives it (cf. Jn 1:5). But the light does not illuminate a person ("whole body") if the eye, the organ for receiving light, is not clear and healthy, as when the lens is clouded with a cataract. A generation that is evil (Lk 11:29) has an unreceptive eye. Its unbelieving, critical attitude clouds over what it sees, introduces doubt, and judges by its own darkened criteria. (CC p. 483)

The right reception of the Gospel involves seeing the signs with the eye, repenting, and believing, as with "the sign of Jonah" (11:29). Or in terms of the ear, it is hearing the Word of God and keeping it (11:28), a hearing "mixed with faith" (Heb 4:2). The Gospel is received through seeing

and hearing, both for Jesus' original observers and hearers and for those who see his light and hear his Word through the church's signs and preaching—the marks of the church. Jesus' second catechetical conclusion is a warning for the church to keep its eye clear, that is, to continue to hear the Word of God and keep it. (CC p. 483)

The baptismal instruction and teaching that bring people into the household of God must be kept pure and clear. If Christian doctrine and practice are clouded, polluted, or obscured, the Gospel will not be able to illuminate the whole body of Christ, and the body will suffer darkness. Those who would journey into the kingdom of God will not be able to see the way unless the shining light is beheld with a clear eye. Jesus' admonit18 expressed in terms of sound: "Therefore take care how you hear." Taken together, these two exhortations summarize the importance of faith and faithfulness in the two major aspects of Christian incorporation: catechesis (hearing) and baptismal illumination (seeing). When kept pure according to the Word of Christ, catechesis, Baptism, and Eucharist make for a church in which the light of the Gospel shines through clear eyes of healthy faith, illuminating the whole body of Christ, brightening the entire household of God, lighting the way for others to be called out of darkness into God's marvelous light (1 Pet 2:9). (CC pp. 483-484)

11:33 *a basket.* A container holding about one peck. (CSB)

may see the light. A lamp is meant to give light to those who are near it (see v. 36). Jesus had publicly exhibited the light of the gospel for all to see, but the Jews requested more spectacular signs. The problem was not with any failure on Jesus' part in giving light; it was with the faulty vision of the Jews. (CSB)

Lamps were set in high places, where they would shed the most light. (TLSB)

11:34 *your eye is healthy.* Those asking for a sign do not need more light; they need good eyes to allow the light to enter. (CSB)

ἁπλούς—Literally, "single" or "simple," the word can mean "healthy" in a physical context or "pure" in an ethical or worship context, reflecting Hebrew תָּם or יָשָׁר. The idea is that the eye functions in the way God intended. (CC p. 475)

11:35 *the light in you be darkness*. "Light" is identified with faith; "darkness," with unbelief. (TLSB)

11:36 *full of light* – τῇ ἀστραπῇ—Jesus uses the same word when he says, "I was watching Satan falling like *lightning* [ὡς ἀστραπήν] from heaven" (10:18). While in the NT it usually denotes lightning, here and in classical Greek it can simply denote a "beam" or "ray" of light emanating from a lamp. (CC P. 475)

Through Jesus, God sanctifies every aspect of His people's lives. (TLSB)

11:33–36 Jesus equates the Gospel with light and faith with a healthy eye. Some people remain in darkness because they reject the Gospel and will not allow the message of salvation to penetrate and dispel the darkness of their souls. The Lord moves us to appreciate that it is God Himself, through His Spirit, who illumines souls and preserves faith in hearts. • "Lord, who once came to bring, On Your redeeming wing, Healing and sight, Health to the sick in mind, Sight to the inly blind: Oh, now to humankind Let there be light!" Amen. (*LSB Accompaniment for the Hymns* 979:2) (TLSB)

Woes to the Pharisees and Lawyers

37 While Jesus was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him, so he went in and reclined at table. 38 The Pharisee was astonished to see that he did not first wash before dinner. 39 And the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. 40 You fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside also? 41 But give as alms those things that are within, and behold, everything is clean for you. 42 "But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. 43 Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. 44 Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without knowing it." 45 One of the lawyers answered him, "Teacher, in saying these things you insult us also." 46 And he said, "Woe to you lawyers also! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. 47 Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. 48 So you are witnesses and you consent to the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them, and you build their tombs. 49 Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,' 50 so that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, 51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation. 52 Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering."

53 As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, 54 lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.

11:37 *was speaking* – λαλῆσαι—In certain contexts, this word carries the connotation of *prophetic* speaking; cf. 1:19 (and comments there). (CC p. 486)

Luke's opening phrase signals a close connection between Jesus' two responses to the challenges thrown against him in the previous passage (11:14–36) and the exchanges at this meal with the Pharisees. The opposition comes to a head. There have been other controversies with the Pharisees: over Jesus' table fellowship with sinners (5:27–39), his behavior on the Sabbath (6:1–11), and his forgiveness of a sinful woman (7:36–50). At this his second meal with Pharisees in Luke, the controversy between Jesus and these religious authorities continues, this time over purification laws. It results in Jesus' woes against them and their increased hostility. There is also a close connection to 7:18–35 and the sayings about Wisdom ("Wisdom" in 7:35 and 11:49; "knowledge" in 11:52). According to Luke 7, God's Wisdom comes in the person of Jesus (preceded by John) but is rejected by the Pharisees. In Luke 11, Jesus stands at the center of the line of the prophets (from Abel to Zechariah) and the apostles who were sent by God but persecuted and killed by Israel. Rejection to the point of the shedding of blood comes also upon John and Jesus. Jesus' death is the eventual result of the plotting that they begin in 11:53–54. Thus, this second meal with the Pharisees brings the controversy to a point where Jesus himself predicts that the religious leaders of Israel will be responsible for the death of more "prophets and apostles" (11:49), just as they have been all through history. (CC p. 489)

reclined at the table – ἀνέπεσεν—"Reclined at table" is the posture for dining at a formal meal. Both ἀναπίπτω and κατακλίνω refer to the act of reclining at a festive meal. ἀναπίπτω is used by the evangelist at 11:37; 14:10; 17:7; 22:14; κατακλίνω is unique to Luke and used by him

at 7:36; 9:14, 15; 14:8; 24:30. This suggests that this meal with a Pharisee is a festive meal, perhaps a Sabbath evening Seder. (CC p. 486)

Jesus chooses the intimacy of a meal for his harshest comments against the Pharisees. The occasion is probably a festive Sabbath evening Seder on the Friday evening before the Sabbath. (This would begin before sundown but continue after sundown into the Sabbath, since the Sabbath began after sundown on Friday.) This would be an occasion for Jesus, as the invited rabbi, to teach at the table in the evening, before teaching in the synagogue Sabbath service the next morning. Jesus' table fellowship consists of three elements: teaching, eating, and his presence. (See the excursus "Jesus' Table Fellowship.") (CC p. 489)

11:38 *did not first wash.* Especially for ceremonial cleansing, not commanded in the law but added in the tradition of the Pharisees (Mk 7:3; cf. Mt 15:9). (CSB)

Jesus did not fulfill the ritual hand washing expected by his host. Though Mosaic Law did not require laypeople to perform such ritual washings before meals, the tradition of the Pharisees did. Accordingly, this is yet another instance of a Pharisee finding fault with Jesus' observance of ritual (cf 5:30, 33; 6:7–11; 15:1–2). (TLSB)

ἐβαπτίσθη—The aorist passive reads somewhat strangely; the variant reading of the middle in P^{45} 700 is to be rejected (even though it is grammatically acceptable) in favor of the harder passive reading. (CC p. 486)

At this meal Jesus does not wash his hands with the ceremonial washing the Pharisees would expect according to their oral tradition of the Law. (Such a requirement was part of the oral code of the Law but is not found in the OT.)

> Only Luke uses βαπτίζω ("baptize") to describe the washing of the hands before eating (Mt 15:2 has νίπτομαι; Mk 7:2 has ἄνιπτος). "To baptize" simply means to apply water, which is the surface meaning here. However, the word would call to the mind of a catechumen that entrance to the full table fellowship of Jesus requires his Baptism with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Lk 3:16)—a washing on the outside that includes a washing on the inside. The structure of the passage encourages this catechetical interpretation. (CC p. 490)

The Pharisee completely misses the revelatory instruction that Jesus has given about the kingdom. His eye is not clear, and his self not illuminated by the light (11:34). He does not understand that true washing comes from submitting himself to the baptisms of John and Jesus, which wash *inside and out* in preparation for and initiation into the coming kingdom (cf. 3:3–17). Only through this washing will he be invited to the eschatological banquet to sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (13:28–30). (CC pp. 489-490)

11:39 *you Pharisees* – οἱ Φαρισαῖοι—The parallel in Mt 23:2, 13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29 has "scribes and Pharisees" and includes the derogatory "hypocrites." Luke, however, following the categories already established at 7:30, begins with "Pharisees" here and moves to "lawyers" at 11:45. (CC p. 486)

Jesus launched into a sustained criticism of the Pharisees' misplaced priorities, spiritual superficiality, and legalism, charging them with hypocrisy for being more concerned with outward appearances than inward truth. (TLSB)

Jesus' scathing indictment of the Pharisees and lawyers is essentially an analysis of their spiritual posture as they attempt to understand and react to him. The evangelist may be creating a subtle frame when he begins with the Pharisee's amazement at Jesus' table etiquette (demonstrating his *misunderstanding of what Jesus has taught* about how one must prepare for table fellowship with him) and ends with a woe against the lawyers for *their failure to open the Scriptures* to their followers *and offer "the key of knowledge"* (11:52). In a sense, the entire passage is an illustration of how the Pharisaic party has failed to interpret the Scriptures in such a way that the key of knowledge opens up the kingdom of God to themselves and their followers. The Pharisees' posture is confirmed by their plotting to catch Jesus in something he has said. Clearly, things are heating up between Jesus and the Pharisees (11:53–54). (CC p. 490)

clean the outside. Engage in ceremonial washings of the body. (CSB)

greed and wickedness. These Pharisees were more concerned about keeping ceremonies than about being moral (cf. Mk 7:20–23). (CSB)

11:40 *fools!* Biblical wisdom is centered on a right knowledge of God. Jesus thus accused the Pharisees of misunderstanding God. (TLSB)

now – οὐχ—By beginning the sentence with οὐχ, Jesus shows he is expecting an affirmative answer. (CC p. 486)

make the inside also. The inside of man (the "heart" and inner righteousness) is more important than the outside (ceremonial cleansing). (CSB)

inside – τὰ ἐνόντα—This phrase is difficult to capture in translation. It is usually understood as meaning "what is inside, the contents" (BAGD s.v. ἔνειμι), either as a direct object, "Give the things inside as alms," or as an accusative of respect, "Concerning the things inside, give alms." L. T. Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke,* 189, suggests: "Luke uses possessions language consistently to symbolize internal responses. Thus, internal qualities such as righteousness should be expressed by the sharing of possessions. This reading matches the 'inner wickedness' of the Pharisees being described as 'greed.' " Less probable is the interpretation "Give what you are able as alms," based on the meaning of the participle in classical Greek, "what is possible, what one can do under the circumstances." (CC p. 486)

11:41 Giving from the heart, esp to those in desperate need, is a much more authentic expression of piety and godliness (cf Jas 1:27). "He requires not only alms, but also the righteousness of faith" (Ap V 34). (TLSB)

give as alms – ἐλεημοσύνην—The word for "alms" is from the word family often translated with "mercy." To give alms to the poor is a clear and unmistakable act of mercy. The word is used again in 12:33 and Acts 3:2, 3, 10; 9:36; 10:2, 4, 31; 24:17). It is a distinctly Lukan word, since the only other passage in the NT in which it occurs is Mt 6:2–4. On mercy, see comments at Lk 1:50. (CC p. 486)

everything will be clean. Giving from the heart makes everything else right. If one gives to the poor, his heart is no longer in the grip of "greed and wickedness" (v. 39). (CSB)

11:42 *woe* – οὐαὶ—A "woe" is the opposite of a benediction. See comments at 6:24. (CC p. 486)

The first three woes (11:42–44) are against the Pharisees and illustrate Jesus' charge that they are more concerned about the outside than the inside. This forms the second part of his indictment of their hypocrisy. Again, the woes apply to the Pharisaic tendencies in all human beings. The Pharisees pay attention to outward shows of piety such as tithing, first seats in the synagogue, and greetings in the marketplaces but neglect to show *the true justice and love* to others and love for God (see textual note on 11:42). Their obsession with outward expressions of piety hides the deeper problem they have in their relationship with God: inwardly they are dark (11:35) and dead. Thus Jesus compares them to "unmarked tombs" (11:44). According to Num 19:16, contact with a grave renders a person unclean for seven days. Likewise, those who come into contact with the Pharisees and listen to their teaching are defiled by false doctrine. Since the Pharisees are "unmarked," other people are not aware of the decay within and so are defiled unknowingly and without warning. Because the Pharisees are obsessed with ritual cleanness (as is evident from Lk 11:38), they would hear Jesus' accusation as a doubly insulting outrage: not only are they unclean, they also defile others too! They stand accused of rejecting God's plan of salvation for themselves (cf. 7:30) and of contaminating others with their dangerous "leaven" (12:1) as well. The Pharisees' hypocrisy keeps them in a posture in which they do not receive what Jesus has come to bring. It is wicked, and it also leads others to follow that path of wickedness. (CC pp. 491 – 492)

tithe mint and rue. The Pharisees were so scrupulous in this regard that they even tithed on their garden spices (rue is an aromatic evergreen). (TLSB)

neglect justice…love of God – τὴν κρίσιν καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ—When Jesus criticizes the Pharisees for failing to display justice and love, he is pointing out that they are failing to live according to the Hebrew Scriptures they claim to reverence so highly. They slavishly follow minor commands while ignoring God's major concerns. The articles with "justice" and "love" indicate the sense of "justice and love *par excellence*," "the *true* justice and love," that is, *God's* justice and love at work through God's people. "Love of/for God" is an objective genitive with God receiving love in fulfillment of the first table of the Decalog: to love God with one's whole heart, soul, strength, and mind (Lk 10:27). Κρίσις, "justice," in this context is more of a Gospel term than Law. It reflects מִשְׁפָּט, "justice," which can denote God's own justice of justifying sinners for the sake of Christ, as when Isaiah prophesies that the Suffering Servant will bring justice to all nations (Is 42:1–4; vv 5–9 explain this in Gospel language). A number of OT passages speak of both justice/justification (מִשְׁפָּט) and love (the verb אָהַב) as done by God (Deut 10:18; Is 61:8; God "loves justice" in Pss 33:5; 37:28; 99:4) or as shown by God's people as their proper response to God (Deut 11:1; 30:16; Amos 5:15; Micah 6:8; cf. Lk 7:29, where the repentant people justified God). In 1 Ki 10:9 = 2 Chr 9:8, the queen of Sheba confesses that God's love for Israel led him to install Solomon as king to bring about justice, while Ps 119:132 speaks of God's justice (final deliverance) for those who love him. (CC pp. 486-487)

Jesus does not condemn the Pharisees' tithing piety but rather their failure to make mercy and justice the first priority. (TLSB)

11:43 *best seats...synagogues...greetings* – τὴν πρωτοκαθεδρίαν ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καὶ τοὺς ἀσπασμοὺς ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς—A similar charge may be found leveled against the scribes at 20:46, where desiring "first couches [πρωτοκλισίας] in the feasts" is also included among their offenses. This must have been a common abuse at the time of Jesus, for it receives a great deal of comment in the gospel, e.g., 14:7–11; 22:24–27. (CC p. 487)

Seats of honor reserved for leaders. *greetings*. Titles of respect and honor, used to address experts in Scripture (e.g., "rabbi"). (TLSB)

11:44 *unmarked graves.* The Jews whitewashed their tombs so that no one would accidentally touch them and be defiled (cf. Nu 19:16; Mt 23:27). Just as touching a grave resulted in ceremonial uncleanness, associating with the Pharisees could lead to moral uncleanness. (CSB)

The Jews carefully marked their graves lest anyone accidentally touch them. Such contact resulted in ritual impurity and disqualified one from temple attendance. Cf Nu 19:16. By calling them "unmarked graves," Jesus effectively characterizes the Pharisees as defiling and dead. (TLSB)

11:45 *insult us also* – ὑβρίζεις—Jesus' criticism of the *Pharisees'* observance of the Law would be a most grievous insult also to the *lawyers,* since lawyers were the legal scholars among the Pharisees. The intimate fellowship at table magnifies the insult. When one lawyer points out that Jesus' woes against the Pharisees also offend *lawyers,* it gives Jesus the opportunity to show how lawyers are guilty of an even greater offense: joining in the continuous massacre of the prophets. (CC p. 487)

It is no surprise to the hearer that Jesus' teaching against the Pharisees (in general) is perceived also by one of the (Pharisaic) lawyers as an insult (11:45). He knows that Jesus is saying Pharisaic religiosity is a facade. He understands that Jesus is impeaching the legalistic belief system of the lawyers too. But Jesus does not allow the lawyer to launch into a defense. Instead, Jesus intensifies his preaching of the Law by leveling three woes against the lawyers. These woes are *in addition* to the others that apply to all who reject Jesus (6:24–26). These woes are directed against those who bear the responsibility of a *teaching* office. Jesus highlights the consequences of their hypocrisy and places their rejection of God into its historical context. (CC p. 492)

Apparently, some non-Pharisees in the audience understood Jesus' remarks as applying to them and took offense. (TLSB)

11:46 *load people down.* By adding rules and regulations to the authentic law of Moses and doing nothing to help others keep them (Mt 23:4), while inventing ways for themselves to circumvent them. (CSB)

Refers to the fact that many expert interpreters added to the demands spelled out in Mosaic Law. (TLSB)

φορτίζετε τοὺς ἀνθρώπους φορτία δυσβάστακτα—As the psalms indicate, particularly Psalm 119, the Torah is a joy for the faithful Israelites to receive and to cherish, to have and to hold. The way of Torah is the way of life and blessing by God's grace. See commentary on 10:27–28. It was the Pharisaic interpretation of Torah as legal obligations—especially in the Pharisees' code of oral law superimposed on the Torah—that made the Law a burden for the people. Jesus' Gospel lifts this burden in his teachings about the Sabbath, table fellowship, and the new kinship. (CC p. 487)

The first woe speaks of what the lawyers *do.* Their office was to teach to the way to eternal life according to the Torah. See the comments on Lk 10:25–36, where Jesus interacted with another *lawyer* who sought eternal life, and Jesus pointed him to the Torah the lawyer knew so well. But here Jesus' indictment is that the lawyers burden others with laws that are unnecessary and lead to death, and they do not lift a finger to help alleviate this load. As a result they follow the pattern of their fathers, who killed the prophets who prepared for Jesus because these prophets pointed out their wickedness. (CC p. 492)

touch. Having increased what was expected of others, the religious leaders addressed here would not "lift a finger" in order to help the people keep their additional requirements. (TLSB)

11:47 Jesus accuses the lawyers and Pharisees of possessing the same spirit as those in previous generations who rejected God's Word and killed the prophets. (TLSB)

you build – οἰκοδομεῖτε—The present tense here implies habitual action. Building and revering the tombs of the prophets has become a custom among the lawyers. Cf. Acts 2:29. (CC p. 487)

build their (prophets) tombs. Outwardly the Jews appeared to honor the prophets in building or rebuilding memorials, but inwardly they rejected the Christ the prophets announced. They lived in opposition to the teachings of the prophets, just as their forefathers had done. (CSB)

The second woe—significantly!—focuses on the continual rejection of the prophetic office by the religious leaders of Israel and on Jesus' place now as the final, eschatological prophet who is rejected. Building tombs for the dead is a way of honoring them, and, on the surface, Jesus seems to be implying (in 11:47) that the lawyers think they are honoring the prophets by building tombs. But there is irony in Jesus' words, and 11:47 must be understood in connection with 11:48, which shows that the building of the tombs is, in actuality, the lawyers' way of approving the killing of the prophets. The lawyers realize how damaging the voice of the prophets is to their interpretation of the Torah, and so they join their fathers in *keeping the prophets dead.* This they do by their misinterpretation of "the justice and the love" (see textual note on 11:42) and by the placing of false burdens on the people. In many ways, this is the most alarming manifestation of their hypocrisy. They join their fathers in the continual murder of God's spokesmen, the prophets and apostles (11:47–51), by failing to preach the prophetic and apostolic Gospel, replacing it with man-made law. (CC p. 492)

11:49 Jesus attributes His adversaries' interest in the prophets' tombs to their complicity in the wrongful deaths of the prophets. (TLSB)

wisdom of God said. Not a quotation from the OT or any other known book. It may refer to God speaking through Jesus, or it may be referring in quotation form to God's decision to send prophets and apostles even though he knew they would be rejected. (CSB)

God's Wisdom has always been personified in the voice of the prophetic office, a voice that always brought rejection to the prophets. They were killed precisely because they spoke for God. Their blood now cries out, from the beginning of the OT to its conclusion. The Wisdom of God was to send a long line of prophets in preparation for his Son as in the parable of the vineyard (20:9–19). This Wisdom is Christological (see comments on 7:35). It is personified in the OT (e.g., Prov 1:20–33; 8:4–36), incarnate in Christ himself (1 Cor 1:18–25), and this divine Wisdom speaks through all the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures. The Scriptures, the prophets and the apostles, and, supremely, Christ himself all bear witness to the divine plan of sending spokesmen to be rejected and killed (Lk 11:49). (CC pp. 492-493)

send them prophets and apostles – ἀποστελῶ εἰς αὐτοὺς προφήτας καὶ ἀποστόλους, καὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀποκτενοῦσιν καὶ διώξουσιν—This accusation of Jesus against the lawyers will be echoed by Stephen in his speech against the Jews when he charges, "Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute?" (Acts 7:52). Significantly, Jesus includes "apostles" alongside prophets

(Mt 23:34 has “wise men and scribes”). Apostles and prophets are complementary, “sent messengers.” The “one sent” is in a ministry based on the *prophetic* pattern. (CC p. 487)

The inclusion of the apostles next to the prophets in 11:49 is the natural result of Jesus’ beatitudes (6:20–22) and his discussion of his relationship to John (7:18–35). The catechetical hearer could not help but think that John the Baptist must now be included in this list. But the catechumen knows that the deaths of all the OT prophets and John the Baptist simply prepared for the death of the final prophet and apostle from God, Jesus Christ, who must perish in Jerusalem, as did so many prophets of old (13:31–34). Even though Jesus does not mention himself, his martyrdom stands at the center of this passage because of Luke’s prophetic pattern (see the excursus “Luke’s Prophet Christology”). Also to be included here are the first martyrs of the church, Stephen and James, along with all the apostles and Christians who have followed Jesus to a martyr’s death. (CC p. 493)

11:50 *blood of all the prophets* – ἵνα ἐκζητηθῇ τὸ αἷμα … ἀπὸ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης—“The blood …” is the subject of the passive verb ἐκζητηθῇ, and the final prepositional phrase (ἀπὸ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης) completes the predicate. The meaning is that “this generation” is being charged with responsibility for the death of all prophets. (On “this generation,” see commentary on 21:32. Cf. Gen 9:5; 2 Sam 4:11; BAGD s.v. γενεά, 2.) (CC pp. 487-488)

These lawyers and the rest of the scribes and Pharisees and “this generation” (11:50) will participate in the rejection of God’s spokesmen by rejecting God’s final prophet, Jesus. For the lawyers and scribes, this is the ultimate offense since they are the official interpreters of the Scriptures, possessing the “key of knowledge,” but they abuse their “office of the keys” (see textual note on 11:52). They possess the key that gives access to faith as it is proclaimed by the prophets in their words and lives. This “key,” ultimately, is the Messiah proclaimed in the OT Scriptures. He is “the key of David” (Is 22:22; Rev 3:7). He exercises the office of the keys, forgiving or retaining sins, opening heaven or condemning to hell, and what he opens or closes, no one can change (Is 22:22; Rev 1:18). He confers this office of the keys on those who minister on his behalf (Mt 16:19). (CC p. 493)

shed from the foundation. From the time sin and death entered the world. (TLSB)

charged against this generation. The current audience has much greater guilt because they reject and kill God’s ultimate envoy, the incarnate Son of God. (TLSB)

11:51 *blood of Abel … Zechariah.* See note on Mt 23:35. (CSB)

Abel. The first man murdered, his righteous witness places him among the “prophets.” *Zechariah*. His murder is recorded in 2Ch 24:20–22. *required*. Idiom for bringing charges against someone. (TLSB)

ἀπὸ αἵματος Ἅβελ ἕως αἵματος Ζαχαρίου—In 2 Chr 24:20–22, Zechariah, son of Jehoiada the priest, was executed by Joash. Zechariah’s dying words were, “May Yahweh see and avenge” (2 Chr 24:22; cf. the LXX.“The Lord look upon it and judge”). Jesus’ reference is intended to embrace the entire OT canon: “When Jesus (Matt 23:35 = Luke 11:51) calls down upon the hypocrites of His day ‘all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah,’ it obviously is a way of saying ‘from Genesis to Chronicles’ (2 Chron. 24:20 ff.), that is, the entire Scriptures of the time” (H. Hummel, *The Word Becoming Flesh*, 617). (CC p. 488)

sanctuary – τοῦ οἴκου—"Temple-house" captures the literal meaning of οἶκος and the location to which it points (the temple). (CC p. 488)

I tell you – On λέγω ὑμῖν, see comments at 4:24. This expression here introduces a statement that was in the previous verse. It highlights how significant it is that it will "be required from this generation." (CC p. 488)

11:52 *the key to knowledge.* The very persons who should have opened the people's minds concerning the law obscured their understanding by faulty interpretation and an erroneous system of theology. They kept themselves and the people in ignorance of the way of salvation, or, as Matthew's account puts it, they "shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces" (Mt 23:13). (CSB)

Ironically, these supposed experts and leaders were obstructing the way to God's grace and salvation by their false teaching. The Gospel of the Holy Scripture, the key to knowing God, is a means of grace (cf Mt 16:19). *enter*. Enter into salvation. (TLSB)

τὴν κλεῖδα τῆς γνώσεως—This verse has to do with the office of the keys, based on Mt 16:19, which will be of great importance for the Christian church. This is the only other NT verse that speaks of a "key" except Mt 16:19; Rev 1:18; 3:7; 9:1; 20:1. The genitive construction means "the key that opens up and thereby imparts knowledge," as with "the key of/to the house of David" in Is 22:22, cited in Rev 3:7, and the keys that open or close heaven or hell in Rev 1:18; 9:1; 20:1. The "knowledge" (γνῶσις) withheld by the lawyers is the "knowledge [γνῶσις] of salvation … in the forgiveness of … sins," as described in Lk 1:77. For Christological Wisdom in the OT, see comments on Lk 7:35, where Jesus speaks of himself as Wisdom incarnate and his disciples as Wisdom's children. This Christological knowledge was revealed in the OT, and it was the responsibility of those who held offices (such as lawyers, who were biblical scholars) to disseminate this knowledge to the people. However, they abused their office by not using the key —not imparting the knowledge of salvation to the people, nor even believing it themselves. The disciples must wield the "key of knowledge" in accord with Christ's words or else they will fall under the same condemnation as the lawyers. (CC p. 488)

But now Pharisaic lawyers and scribes are guilty, as Jesus says in Matthew's parallel, of abusing the key and their office by "shutting up the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 23:13). They do not enter the kingdom, and they keep others from entering it. The key to the kingdom is Jesus. The Scriptures they are to teach testify to him (Jn 5:39). Twisting and misinterpreting the Scriptures, they reject him and work to cut others off from his kingdom. (CC p. 493)

hindered. By replacing the divine revelation with man-made teachings. (TLSB)

11:53–54 They began showering Him with questions, hoping He would express Himself poorly and give them a basis for charges against Him. (TLSB)

11:53 *scribes and Pharisees* – οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι—Luke switches here to "Pharisees and scribes." Lk 11:39–44 was addressed to "Pharisees,' " and 11:45–52 was addressed to "lawyers." "Scribes" (scholars of Scripture) encompasses "lawyers" (scholars of the Law). Both were part of the Pharisaic party. The scribes are the only religious figures to appear with Jesus in all three localities of his teaching: Galilee, during the journey to Jerusalem, and in Jerusalem itself. Scribes are leaders of the Pharisees who represented the Pharisees on the Sanhedrin (see the excursus "The Opponents of Jesus in Luke"). (CC p. 488)

press him hard and to provoke him – δεινῶς ἐνέχειν—BAGD (s.v. ἐνέχω, 1) notes "cf. our colloq. 'have it in for someone,' " which, in fact, is the literal translation of ἐνέχω, "to have in." In the Greek idiom, one supplies the word χόλον, "bile, wrath." (CC p. 488)

11:54 *lying in wait to catch him.* The determination of the religious leaders to trap Jesus is evident throughout Luke (6:11; 19:47–48; 20:19–20; 22:2). (CSB)

The irony is that what Jesus said about the scribes and Pharisees rejecting him leads immediately to their plotting and hunting to find an accusation of a capital crime. They have already accused Jesus of blasphemy (Lk 5:21). Now their hostility is growing, and they begin to go over every word issuing from his mouth (ἀποστοματίζειν), hunting (ἐνεδρεύοντες) for something incriminating (11:53–54). The intensity of the controversy between Jesus and the religious establishment outside of Jerusalem has reached a new level, and the fulfillment of 11:49 in Jesus' death now seems inevitable. (CC pp. 493-494)

11:37–54 Jesus' harshest criticisms are directed at those religious leaders and experts in Scripture who place their traditions above God's Word and refuse God's call to repentance. Measure all traditions against God's Word, especially the standards of mercy Jesus emphasized. Give thanks to God for faithful traditions that agree with His Gospel, which alone grants us salvation in Christ. • "Not what I feel or do Can give me peace with God; Not all my prayers and sighs and tears Can bear my awful load. Thy work alone, O Christ, Can ease this weight of sin; Thy blood alone, O Lamb of God, Can give me peace within." Amen. (*LSB* 567:2–3). (TLSB)