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MANITOULIN BIBLE SCHOOL - 2003

THE FOUR FACES OF CHRIST

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Study #3: Luke, the Face of the Man

Well, thank you brother chairman, and good morning my dear brethren and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This morning then, we're going to look at the gospel of Luke and as our chairman has rightly said, the face of the **man**. So we need to turn to page 15 of our workbook. Now let me start with a little thing for you to think about. I think what has tended to happen in terms of the face of the man in the gospel of Luke, is that people say well, this is Christ, **the perfect man!** The funny thing is I actually think that that's probably not so! and the reason is as follows: you see, when we were looking at the gospel of Matthew which was the face of the 'lion', we concluded that the gospel depicts Christ as the perfect (not the perfect lion) but the perfect 'king' which the lion is a symbol of. When we came to the gospel of Mark we didn't say, 'ah, this is Christ ,the perfect ox, did we? we said this is Christ the perfect...whatever the ox is a symbol of, because the cherubic faces are **symbols**, are they not? So why when we come to the gospel of Luke would we say this is the face of the perfect man? The man is obviously a symbol, just as the ox, lion and eagle are symbols, the man is a symbol and the one thing you can't have a symbol of, is the thing itself! A man can't be a symbol of a man! something cannot symbolize itself. The moment you take a man as a symbol of a man it's no longer a symbol, it's real! So the question is, b&s, what then does the face of the man represent? and I think there is an answer to that puzzle and God willing, that's what we're going to try and investigate in the course of our study now, of the face of the man in the gospel of Luke,

Well, let's just imagine, for a moment, that we were looking into the face of a man this time, right up close! the face of a man. Just as we gazed upon the face of the lion and the ox, let us look closely at the face of a man, and what would we see? what would we be impressed with, b&s, in that face? I think the first thing is that we would see the eyes again, and the eyes would be quite different to the lion and the ox, because the eyes of the man would have one remarkably different quality about them and that's this; that they would show **understanding** which no animal can show! There would be the principle of **sympathy, of intelligence** and if this man upon whose face we are gazing, was to open his mouth, we would not here the roar of the lion or the gentle lowing of the ox, but we would actually here the voice of wisdom and communication, which an animal cannot do. So what does the man symbolize then in the gospel of Luke, b&s? Well, I can think of two people from the scriptural perspective of whom the record was

insistent, that they needed to be taken, from amongst the common stock of humanity; that they needed to bear human nature in order for their ministrations to be effective . Now one of those, of course, was the king; do you remember how it says in the book of Deuteronomy that a king had to be taken from out of the midst of his own brethren; but it can't be the face of the king! because we've already looked at that in the face of the lion in Matthew; but there was another man in Israel's history of whom the record tells us that it was vital that he be taken from among men, and that's the high priest. Now just listen to these references in the book of Hebrews, I'll just read them out but I'll give them to you as I go, but there's no need to turn them up.

In Hebrews 2 verses 17 and 18 it says, 'For in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself had suffered being tempted, is able to succour them that are tempted'. Hebrews 4 verse 15 says, 'For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin'. Hebrews 5 verses 1 and 2 says, 'For every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices, who can have compassion on the ignorant and them that are out of the way, for that he also himself is compassed with infirmities'. The priest had to be taken from among men, b&s, in order that his ministrations, his priestly ministrations, might be according to the bond of sympathy. So what is the face of man in scripture then? well, firstly, **it's the radiance of wisdom**; Ecclesiastes 8 verse 1 says, 'A man's wisdom causes his face to shine'; Acts 6 verse 15 tells us that when they looked upon the face of Stephen, as he began to unfold the arguments of scripture, it says his face was as the face of an angel. So the face of a man is about the principle of the radiance of wisdom; it's about **the compassion of friendship** because Exodus 33 verse 11 says that God spake with Moses face to face as a man speaketh with his friend and when one gazes upon the face of a man one sees the principle of friendship and the principle, of course, of **intercession in the face of the priest** will be a special feature of his manhood. Yes, b&s, I think that the face of the man in the gospel of Luke is **the face of the priest**.

So let us see if we can track our way through that theme now, in the gospel page. Firstly, what about the **man in the tribe**? Well, let's come back to our promises of Jacob in Genesis 49. So now, which tribe does this promise relate to? can anyone tell me what is the tribe this time? It's Reuben, yes, it was the man who was encamped on which side? it's the man who is encamped on the **south** side, the tribe of Reuben to the south which was the flag of the man and the book of **Ezekiel** and the gospel of **Luke**. So we're dealing with Reuben and in verse 3 of Genesis 49 it says, 'Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, thou **shalt not have** the excellency', says Genesis 49 verse 4. You know, b&s, the firstborn had three particular and special rights, what were they? the firstborn in the family! He had the double portion, the right of priesthood, and the right of rulership; three things that belonged to the firstborn: **the right of rulership, the right of priesthood, and the right of the double portion of**

**the firstborn.** What we're being told in Genesis 49 verse 3, that Reuben therefore as the firstborn son, was the priest in his household. I believe, that when Genesis 49 verse 3 talks about the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power, I think that those two phrases are a reference to, well, I think the excellency of dignity is probably the priesthood and the excellency of power is the kingship or rulership that belonged to the firstborn, and what verse 4 said, is because Reuben, in fact, fell away and disgraced his position, he was not to have the **excellency**, it was to be taken off from him; and do you know, b&s, that's exactly what happened to him, because think of the 3 rights that Reuben had. The right of kingship was taken off Reuben and given to Judah; the right of priesthood was taken off Reuben and given to Levi; and the right of double portion was taken off Reuben and given to Joseph. All the rights of the firstborn were stripped off Reuben ultimately, but in the first instance, because he was the firstborn man of his family, he was the priest, and by the way, Kiel and Delich which was a commentary on the Old Testament record and particularly on the Jewish nature of things, tell us that on the flag of Reuben's ensign fluttered the face of a man, to indicate that he was the firstborn son. By the way, you'll probably remember in the book of Exodus in chapter 19 (we won't turn to it now) but when the children of Israel assemble at Mount Sinai, Moses was expressly told that **the priests** were not to come near! Now what's strange about that is that the house of Levi have not yet been selected in Exodus 19, they're not selected until Exodus 32, so who were the priests that were not to come near in Exodus 19? the house of Levi hadn't been chosen for priesthood yet? what thinkest thou? the firstborn of every family, they were the priests and Reuben was the priest because he was the firstborn.

Now what about the face of the man in the prophet? Ah, well come and have a look at the prophecy of Ezekiel. If you were to say, b&s, what do you think the great theme of the prophecy of Ezekiel is? I think that most of us would agree that the greatest theme of Ezekiel's prophecy is about **the glory of Yahweh, the glory which is first to be seen in the temple, then it comes out from the temple, being carried by the cherubim. It goes up onto the Mount of Olives and it disappears from sight**, and only later in the book of Ezekiel, at the very end does it say, that the glory returns. But where does it return to? b&s, it returns back to the temple, the temple of the age to come! When it returns to the temple, there's a man there inside the temple who's famous in the latter chapters of the book of Ezekiel; he's described as a Prince, but what does He really do? He officiates as the **priest** in that particular building in the latter chapters of the book of Ezekiel. The book of Ezekiel is all about the glory of the presence of Yahweh in the temple where the priest officiates.

Now Ezekiel 1, see what it says then in Ezekiel 1 verse 1, it says, 'It came to pass in the 30<sup>th</sup> year in the 4<sup>th</sup> month, in the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God'. You know, b&s, in Ezekiel 1 verse 1, when it says, 'it came to pass in the 30<sup>th</sup> year', the question is the 30<sup>th</sup> year of what? Well, it can't be the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the captivity, because verse 2 says it's the 5<sup>th</sup> year of king Jehoiachin's captivity, so the 30<sup>th</sup> year of what,

b&s? and the answer is I think it was the 30<sup>th</sup> year of Ezekiel, and the reason why we believe that to be the case is, because in verse 3 it says that 'the word of Yahweh came expressly unto Ezekiel, ah! the **priest!** did you notice that? Ezekiel the priest, and you see, the significance of the 30 years in verse 1 as the margin tells us in Numbers 4 verse 3, is that the priests began their priestly ministrations at the age of 30, says Numbers 4 verse 3; so when Ezekiel 1 says that it came to pass in the 30<sup>th</sup> year, that these visions came to him, it was the beginning of his priestly ministrations. Do you know how the visions came to him in verse 1? it says 'the heavens were opened, and I saw the visions of God'.

Well, would you like to see that in the gospel of Luke? Just come and have a look at this, b&s, in Luke 3 and tell me whether the spirit of Ezekiel is to be found in the gospel of Luke? because Luke 3 verse 21 says, 'Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized and praying, **the heaven was opened**', now do you know where that comes from? that's straight from Ezekiel chapter 1 verse 1, 'the heavens were opened' and you'll never guess what Luke goes on to say, b&s, in Luke 3? it says verse 23, 'And Jesus Himself began to be, why? about 30 years of age'. Now why would Luke tell us that, b&s? unless he's telling us that this is the beginning of the ministrations of another priest! for whom the heavens will again be opened. By the way, only Luke does tell us that that was the age of Christ, only Luke tells us that He was 30 years of age when His ministry began.

Of course, you know how the gospel of Luke actually opens, if you come back to Luke 1, how does the gospel open? Well after the introductory words of verses 1 to 4, Luke 1 verses 1 to 4 being the introduction, this is how the gospel proper opens: verses 5, 'There was in the days of Herod, king of Judea, **a certain priest**' and that priest, verse 9, is ministering in the temple of God. That's how the whole book opens! a vision vouchsafe unto a priest of God in the temple; do you think this is a parallel to the prophecy of Ezekiel, b&s? That vision to the priest goes on right through to the end of verse 25, and then the record changes in Luke 1 and it starts to talk about Mary and the child that she's going to bear, but the strange thing about the balance of Luke 1, is that it's going to paint a portrait that **the servant seeks no pre-eminence!** he who wants to be first shall be last. That's the spirit of this gospel and to be first in this gospel is to be of the priestly line. But Mary stands related to her says Luke 1, in fact, she goes to visit her cousin who is of priestly blood, and where does she go? Well, it says in verse 39 of Luke 1 that 'Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, unto a city of Judah (I haven't got time to talk about this just now, b&s, but I think that that city she went into was the city of Hebron, and the city of Hebron was the city of the high priest, and that's where Mary goes). When the Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 2 is presented before, well, He's taken to the temple to be presented before Yahweh because He's holy as verse 23 says, 'every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the LORD', but the holiest of all of Israelites that were presented to God, says Leviticus 21, where the priests especially, they were holy to God in a way that was different to all the others, and this child will be taken into the temple as the priestly ministrations of this gospel commence.

I suppose in a way, that really takes us to the genealogy then of Luke 3, because Luke's genealogy is different, is it not? to that of Matthew's; Matthew traces the genealogy of Jesus through His father, Joseph, His earthly guardian, to show that He was the rightful legal heir to the throne of the king of Israel, even David. Whereas Luke 3's genealogy, we believe, is the genealogy of His mother and that genealogy goes in the opposite direction. Instead of coming up to Christ, it goes from Christ backwards, backwards, backwards, backwards, did you notice how far backwards the genealogy of Christ goes, b&s? Well, of course, it goes backwards to Adam through **Shem** in verse 36, by the way, and I believe brother Thomas is correct in that Shem is Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God, and ends up with a man called in verse 38, why, Adam, which was the son of God. In fact, you know b&s, Adam was the **firstborn son** of God, and therefore, he had the priestly right. Adam was the first priest because he was the firstborn son, and Christ traces His genealogy back to the first priest that ever existed. You know, b&s, in Nehemiah 7 verses 64 and 65 it says that some priests were put out from the priesthood for what reason? that they could not prove their genealogy. Here is a priest whose genealogy is so complete and so entire, that He can trace His line of descent back to the very beginning of the foundation of the world, and what it will show is that this man is drawn from humanity, He's a son of Adam. He's of the same nature as those He comes to minister amongst, oh yes, and of course, you know what the title, the famous title of the book of Ezekiel is in describing the priests who are ministering in that book, he's known, of course, as the son of man, over and over again in the book of Ezekiel.

Well, b&s, I've spent far too long on that introductory phase, but hopefully I've whetted your appetite as to the possibilities here. So let's move on then to the next section,

**Luke - Three notable inclusions.** Well, the first is Luke 16 verses 19 to 31 which is, of course, **the parable of the rich man and Lazarus**. You know, b&s, I'd love to spend time on a lot of these stories, and it's such a shame that we can't, but do you know, that this parable is firstly, it's unique to Luke's gospel. Let me tell you what I think the parable is about! It says in verse 19, 'There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day'. Now b&s, who were the wealthy class in Israel in the days of Jesus? The Pharisees or the Sadducees? the Sadducees, and the Sadducees were not only the wealthy class, those that were clothed in purple, but they were also the **priests**, were they not? and the man of verse 19, the nameless, certain rich man was not only clothed with purple but he wears, why? fine linen! oh, I think he's a priest, b&s, the nameless man of the parable. If you were to tell me the one doctrine that the Sadducees were famous for not believing in, what doctrine might that be? they didn't believe in the resurrection. At the end of this parable, Jesus is going to say, verse 31, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead'. This parable is going to be an indictment on the Sadducees, but not just the Sadducees, b&s, on one particular Sadducee; it's the Sadducee of whom this parable will say in verse 28, 'I have 5 brethren' and a man called Annas, who was, of course, the leader of the high priestly

family of the Sadducees in the days of Christ, a man called Annas, firstly, had his son-in-law, as high priest whose name was Caiaphas, and Annas had 5 sons, all the brethren of Caiaphas, who in sequence one after the other, all became the high priests of Israel. 'I've got five brethren' says this mysterious certain man of the parable, oh, yes, he did. You see, I think this parable is the Lord's indictment upon the high priest of Israel. Oh, there's a lot more we could say about this parable, what a shame that we haven't got time! but here's our one line summary and this is only in Luke's gospel and well, it's not surprising because here **the priest indicts His counterfeit**. This is the true priest indicting the false one! This is Christ's parable against the counterfeit high priest.

In Luke 19 we've got the story of **the visitation of Jesus to the household of Zaccheus**, 'Make haste, Zaccheus, for I must abide at thy house this day', and at the end of this story we're told that Jesus says to him, 'This day is salvation come to this house; for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost'. This day is salvation come to this house, who was able to bring salvation, b&s, in Israel? who dealt in matters of salvation? but the priest! and what had happened on that glorious day when the Lord dined at the house of Zaccheus was, that the priest had dined with him, and was able to offer to him, the principle of forgiveness by which salvation might come into the household. So I think that's the one line summary **the priest comes with salvation!** that's going to be the whole spirit of this gospel, is that Christ's work pre-eminently in Luke, will be the work of a **priest**.

And lastly in that section, we've got **the proclamation over Jerusalem**, Luke 19, of course, later on, tells us later on that the Lord rode into Jerusalem. This is what he said, come and have a look at this in chapter 19 verse 41, 'And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it, and He said, 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee roundabout, and keep thee in on every side. And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall **not leave in thee one stone upon another**'. You know, b&s, only Luke tells us that Jesus cried, Jesus wept when He looked over Jerusalem; do you know why? because Leviticus 14 tells us in verses 33 to 53, that it was the responsibility of the priest to come and see if there ever were a suspicion of **leprosy** in the house, and it said, 'the priest shall come and look, and behold, if there were a fretting leprosy in the house, then the priest would utter judgment against the building, and the building would be condemned and it would be taken apart and they would leave **not one stone upon another**'. And Jesus says in Luke 19 at the end of verse 44, 'thou knewest not the time of thy (inspection)' is what the word means in the Greek (1984) and the reason why He wept, b&s, and here's our one line summary, is because **the priest can recognize corruption**. He was trained to do that, you see, and He wept because He saw the signs of a fretting leprosy in the house of God and in the household of God, and only Luke tells us that He wept.

**Three important omissions.** I think, b&s, I might just give you the one line summaries because I'm not going to get through today unless I abbreviate a little; I got carried

away there at the start, I'm sorry that I did that; one must be very disciplined with time! So the one line summaries for the important omissions are simply this: The first one - the request of Zebedee's sons omitted from Luke, **the priest confers no titles**; the rendezvous in Galilee, which by the way, is mentioned in Matthew, Mark and John by implication, but is mysteriously absent in Luke, no mention of ever rendezvousing in Galilee later, I think the reason is and here's the one line summary, **the priest remains near the temple**. Only Luke omits the reference to the visit to Galilee; and the debate in the treasury, where Jesus brings condemnation upon His people, the one line summary is **the priest does not condemn!** A king might and someone else might, but not the priest. The priest does not condemn the debate in the treasury.

So let's now come to the **three special features**. Well the first one is this, it's a remarkable feature of the gospel of Luke and that is the story of **the journey to Jerusalem**. Let's have a look at 2 or 3 of these: you see the reference in Luke 13, come and have a look at Luke 13, I just want you to get the sense of this, b&s. In Luke 13 verse 22 it says, 'He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying to Jerusalem'. Now have a look at chapter 17 verse 11 and it says, 'It came to pass, as He went to Jerusalem, that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee'; chapter 19 verse 28 says, 'And when He had thus spoken, He went before, ascending up to Jerusalem'. One of the great themes of the gospel of Luke is that Jesus seems to be on a perpetual journey to Jerusalem, He's always walking to Jerusalem, it's a notable feature, in fact, let me tell you how notable it is; (you may need to find space to write this in somewhere over the top of that) but the total number of references to Jerusalem in the gospels are as follows; Matthew 13 times; Mark 11 times; Luke 33 times, and John 13 times. **Jerusalem**, it's a key idea in the gospel of Luke, and not just Jerusalem, b&s, but the journey of Christ towards Jerusalem. Why do you think the gospel speaks of this? ah, because this man is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, and Melchizedek is priest of Salem. So the one line summary is **the priest belongs in Salem**, that's where His priesthood is! So this gospel is all about the journey of this priest that He might arrive at the place of His ministrations. It's a notable feature of this gospel.

The second one is **the extent of salvation!** The priest ministers for all! If you go through those references, b&s, you'll find that salvation is an expansive concept in the gospel of Luke; it reaches out to all because you see, that's the spirit of the priest after the manner of Hebrews 5 verses 8 to 10, that the priest is there that He might reach out to have compassion on all those that are out of the way, that He might bring salvation to them all!

So the one line summary is **the priest ministers for all!** that's one of the key features of this gospel.

The third is like unto it, do you remember that the notable feature of the gospel of Matthew was that it was a gospel of speeches and Mark was the gospel of emotions and now in Luke's gospel we've got the gospel of **individuals**. It's one of the unique features of the gospel and it is that salvation is not of nations or families, but ultimately

of individuals, and the priest comes to save people one by one. So there is tremendous focus on the individuals in this particular gospel. You know, Matthew's parables are mainly about the kingdom of heaven; Luke's parables are invariably about individuals, because that's who the priest ministers amongst! So the one line summary is **the priest reaches each person!** and this gospel will be unique in that sense, of how individuals were to be touched by the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Three Old Testament references.** Well Luke 4 quotes **Isaiah 61**, He stands up in a certain synagogue on a certain day and He says, 'The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me; for He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the meek'. Isaiah 61 says He's anointed, that's interesting! Who was anointed in Israel? the king and the priest. If you read Isaiah 61, b&s, a little later, you'll find that it's riddled with ideas of priesthood, and I think the anointed man of Isaiah 61 was not a king but a priest, and Jesus stands up and quotes this particular chapter of Isaiah because it relates to His anointing to priesthood and says, 'this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears; to preach the acceptable year of the LORD'. Of course, the acceptable year, by the way, b&s, was the year of Jubilee, and the priest was deeply involved in the ministrations that took place on that special occasion. So the one line summary is **the priest promises true deliverance**, this is the priest that is able to preach the Jubilee year of liberty and release even from sin itself.

In Luke 7 we have a quotation drawn from **Malachi 3**, and if I were to quote Malachi 3 from memory, it starts something like, 'Behold, I will send My messenger and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple', and do you know what Malachi goes on to say, it says, 'He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and He shall purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold that they may offer unto Yahweh an offering'. The man who comes to the temple in Malachi is a priest, who will purify the priesthood, who will serve with Him. Luke quotes that in his gospel, you see, because it's relevant to the promise of the priesthood. So the one line summary is **the priest purifies the priesthood**.

The last one is, and well, we would expect this one, wouldn't we? **Psalm 110**, quoted in Luke 20, not that it's unique, but why would he be quoting Psalm 110? 'Yahweh said unto my Adon, sit thou at my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool. Yahweh hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek'. We would not be surprised, would we, b&s, to find that particular Old Testament reference embedded in the gospel of Luke, because of this theme?

**Three key words.** Well, the first word is the word '**laos**' and the word 'laos' means 'people' (2992), it's one of the Greek words for people, but it's interesting that the word 'laos' is what word in the English derived from 'laos'? the 'laity'; ah, now what does the word 'laity' mean? it is actually the people as opposed to the priesthood. So this word describes those among whom the priest ministers; for example, Matthew favours the word 'ochlos' (3793) in the Greek, which is actually the common word for 'multitude' because 'multitudes' swarmed to hear the speeches of the king, but the priest comes to

minister amongst the laity, the 'laos', the people. The word is found 15 times in Matthew, 3 times in Mark, 33 in Luke, and 3 times in John.

Amongst those people, b&s, that the priest comes to minister among, there are lots of those who may be described as the second word tells us, as '**hamartolos**' and 'hamartolos' means 'sinners' (268); ah, they're sinners! and pre-eminently those that the priest comes to assist are those that are suffering from the consequences of sin. So the summary is that **it indicates the class of people that the priest seeks to save!** These are especially they amongst whom the priest seeks to save, 'I'm not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance'; would you expect that phrase in the gospel of Luke? Oh, yes, of course! It's found 5 times in Matthew, 6 times in Mark, 18 times in Luke and 4 times in John. The man of Luke's gospel works with sinners, that's the work of a priest, b&s.

The last word here, '**sozo**' which is actually a number of Greek words in slightly different formats, and it's the word 'save and salvation' (4982). Well that word describes the issue of the priest's whole objective; **it describes the issue of the priest's whole objective.** Because what does a priest come to do? not just to minister amongst sinners but hopefully to save them. Here are the words of Hebrews, 'that we have a High priest who ever lives to make intercession for us; wherefore we are able to come near to Him, whereby He is able to save us to the uttermost, to come unto God by Him'. The priest's work was to save from sin! well, this word is found 15 times in Matthew, 15 times in Mark, 27 times in Luke, and 8 times in John. You see, these are the key words of a priest! are they not? He comes to minister amongst the people that need a priest; He comes to deal with sinners and His object is to save them; that's priestly ministrations!

**Three unique passages.** Well, here they are, b&s, and the first is, and maybe now this emerges with a new sense of interest. Do you remember **the story of a little boy who was in the temple** in Luke 2, ah, and what does the record tell us, it says, 'when his mother and father found him again, and they had searched Jerusalem for him; they found him, surprise, surprise, in the midst of the temple. What was He doing in the temple? well verse 46 of Luke 2 says, 'that He was sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and **asking them questions**', you see, Malachi 2 verse 7 says, 'the priests' lips should keep knowledge for the people seek the Law at his mouth'. This little boy needed to know about the principles of the Law, so he's amongst the priests in the temple debating what the Law really means. Even as a boy, His priesthood had begun in that sense. **The priest understands the Law**, is our one line summary. 'All they that heard Him were astonished at His answers'!

In Luke 15 we have what's called, **The parables of the Lost**; the lost sheep, the lost coin and (mark this well, b&s) the lost sons. The whole of Luke 15 is the parable of how one ought to go about recovering lost ones in different situations. You know, apart from the parable of the lost sheep which is found in a slightly different form in Matthew, these parables essentially are unique to the gospel of Luke. Why would the parables of the

lost be unique to the gospel of Luke? because Hebrews tells us, that the priest is to have compassion on the ignorant and on those that are 'out of the way', the lost ones! So the one line summary is, **the priest seeks to recover!** That's his work, the priest works amongst lost ones, that's the very spirit that the priest desires, that he seeks to recover, b&s, and I think that's why these parables are in this particular gospel and uniquely so!

In Luke 17 we have **the miracle of the ten lepers who were all cleansed**. One of them, of course, remembers and turns back, do you remember that? of course, the man that turned back was doubly cleansed because this priest in this gospel could do what no priest in Israel could do! He couldn't just cleanse from leprosy, b&s, He was able to cleanse from the **sin** which the leprosy was a symbol of. The one line summary therefore is, **the priest cleanses from sin!** only Luke tells us that story of the man who came back and received the cleansing from the true priest, which the priest of Moses could not give to him.

**Three major themes in Luke.** So now we come then, to our three major themes for this particular gospel. And look, b&s, they're just marvellous, when you just see the spirit of this gospel in the context of priesthood. The first one is **the power of universal compassion!** one of the things in this gospel is that Christ reaches out to absolutely everyone (now let me just add the lines for you, the missing words, here they are) Luke 7 verses 11 to 16, is about the miracle of life for the bereft widow; Luke 7 verses 37 to 50 is about the blessing of forgiveness for the sinful woman; Luke 13 verses 11 to 17 is about the wonder of release for the despondent cripple (the woman that was bowed down and could in no wise lift herself up); Luke 17 verses 11 to 19 is about the joy of cleansing for the despised alien; Luke 19 verses 1 to 10 is about the warmth of approval for the social outcast; Luke 22 verses 50 to 51 is about the gentleness of care for the smitten enemy; and Luke 23 verses 39 to 43 is about the promise of hope for the penitent thief. Now, b&s, just stop and think about this! the man of this gospel is portrayed as a man of universal compassion, what's that? that's priestly! Hebrews says, 'He's taken from among men so that He might have compassion on the ignorant', that's got to be a quality of priesthood, that priests must demonstrate compassion, and this gospel pre-eminently paints the portrait of a Christ who was so marvellously compassionate to all who came within the orbit of His influence. It's one of the great themes, oh by the way, you do realize that everyone of those matters in that theme, everyone of those episodes is entirely unique to Luke's gospel. Only Luke records all those, they're all exclusive to the gospel of Luke; this is the man of compassion, b&s, this is the gospel that will show us that man.

Now the second theme is and you might think this a little strange but this is actually a wonderful idea once you get to grips with it. The theme is entitled, **the blessing of personal fellowship**; now what this is about, and you see where it says references to Christ and then there's a suitable blank line there, well the missing word there is **eating**, references to Christ eating. Now it's an amazing thing, b&s, but the moment you embark into the body of the gospel of Luke, Christ never stops eating meals, He's flat-out eating food all the way through this gospel - like no other gospel. It's true, I

assure you! in fact, let me give you the other places, there's a few missing things to add in here: so here we go! You've already got the Luke ones, but let me give you the other gospels; now you see, in Matthew's gospel in the second one, He dines at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, that's in John 2 verse 2. So if you put 2 verse 2 in that column, it's only in John, so it gets a blank line in Matthew, Mark as well as Luke.

The second one: **He dines at Matthew's feast**, that's in Matthew 9 verse 10, and it's also in Mark 2 verse 15, and it's in Luke, but it's not in John, so John gets a dash.

The third one: **He dines at Simon's house**, is only in Luke.

The fourth one: **He dines with Mary and Martha**, is only in Luke.

The next one: **He dines with a Pharisee**, is only in Luke,

The next one: **He dines with some Pharisees**, is only in Luke.

The next one: **He dines with Zaccheus**, is only in Luke

Then **He dines at Bethany**: well, of course, all the gospels with the exception of Luke, tell us about the dinner at Bethany: so that's in Matthew 26 verse 6; in Mark 14 verse 3; and John 12 verse 2 has the dinner at Bethany as well.

Then **the dinner of the Upper Room** is the one meal that all the records record. So dining in the Upper Room is Matthew 26 verse 20; it's Mark 14 verse 17; and it's also in John 13 verse 4.

Then **the dining with the two of Emmaus** is only in Luke,

**The dining with the disciples** is only in Luke.

The **dining at the lake** is only in the gospel of John in chapter 21 and verse 13.

Now, b&s, if you've written all those things down correctly, what you should have if you total them up at the bottom is, that there are:

3 meals in Matthew  
3 meals in Mark  
9 meals in Luke  
4 meals in John

Now let me tell you the significance of that, as far as the priesthood is concerned. Well, it's to do with the 2 references that we have below (don't turn them up, I'm just going to read them to you). Leviticus 22 verse 10 says, 'There shall **no stranger** eat of the holy thing; a sojourner of the priest or a hired servant shall **not eat of the holy thing**. But if the priest buy any soul with his money, he shall eat of it and he that is born in his house, he shall eat of his meat. If the priest's daughter be married unto a stranger, she may not eat of the holy things; if a man eat of the holy things unwittingly, then he shall give the fifth part unto the priest with the holy thing. They shall not profane the holy things of the children of Israel or suffer them to bear the iniquity of trespass when they eat their holy things'. You know, b&s, Leviticus 22 tells us that the high priest under the Law of Moses, the high priest ate the holy things which were provided, of course, by the tithes of others. But because they were holy, **he had to eat them alone**. Now, eating to the Jew and perhaps even to the Christadelphian, is the symbol of fellowship! to eat

together a meal, to break bread together, common bread, was a symbol of fellowship and union, of friendship, of companionship, and the strange thing was that in the Law of Moses, the one man who was suppose to have compassion on others and minister amongst them, could never eat with them. He dined alone! because he dined on holy things. The Law made him separate from the very ones he was suppose to minister among. Isn't that strange? But the man of this gospel, the priest of this gospel, is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, and Genesis 14 says of that man, that Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth **bread and wine and sat down and had a meal with Abraham**. I think that's the force of these meals in the gospel of Luke, you see, because here is the priest at last, **who can dine with all of us, in fellowship, wonderful fellowship!** and we break bread together with our priest, week by week. **He is not separated from us!** Oh, I think this is a marvellous theme in this gospel! Now you tell me, b&s, why else are we told about all the meals in this gospel?

Well, here's the last theme, it's **the example of constant prayer!** Let me give you the missing spots, first of all, the second one, prayer in a solitary place, is only found in Mark 1 verse 35; the prayer that the Lord offers after the feeding of the 5,000 (that's 5 lines down) is found in Matthew 14 verse 23, and it's also found in Mark 6 verse 46, but it's not found in Luke and John. In fact, the only prayer that John records is the one (4 up from the bottom) which is, of course, the prayer after the Upper Room and that's got to be John 17 verse 1, only John records that prayer. There is a prayer in Gethsemane that the other gospels record (the third last) is in Matthew 26 verse 36 and it's also in Mark 14 verse 32; and the first prayer at Golgotha is also to be found in Matthew 27 verse 46 and also in Mark's gospel, Mark 15 verse 34. Now they are the missing prayers, b&s, now if you add those up you should have the following in the columns:

3 prayers in Matthew  
4 prayers in Mark  
10 prayers in Luke  
1 prayer in John

So the theme of this particular matter is **the example of constant prayer**. This is pre-eminently the gospel where our Lord Jesus Christ is seen to be at prayer, in fact, you'll notice at the bottom that we've said, that Luke records 2 unique parables on, in Luke 18 verses 1 to 8 firstly, the need for **persistence in prayer** and the second parable which is like unto the first, is on the need for **humility in prayer**, Luke 18 verses 9 to 14. B&S, the gospel of Luke is pre-eminently the gospel of prayer! Now why would that be so? because this is the man who makes intercession. You see, the high priest, remember in Israel, had upon his heart a breastplate, do you remember this? with the names of all the tribes engraved on it, and he wore that when he went in to the Holy place, in order to intercede on behalf of God, and the priests' especial responsibility was to lift up his voice in intercessory prayer on behalf of the nation, that he might seek the good of all and not forget any of them; that was the special work of the priest in Israel, the high priest. Well, the man of this gospel is a man especially of prayer, and oh, by the way, b&s, you remember that there were different prayers

uttered at Golgotha, and this is one of them, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!' is that intercessory? b&s. Which gospel do you think that might be in? it's in Luke! I think He's the man of prayer, b&s, because I think He's the priest.

So coming over the page, let's take our summary then for Luke, the face of the man. So page 17, the face of the man in Luke is the face, **not of the perfect man, but of the perfect priest**. Now I think we have the spirit of the gospel because Luke depicts Christ from the standpoint of His **intercessory spirit, and sympathetic care**. That's the face of the man in this gospel, His intercessory spirit and sympathetic care! Now the summary phrase; can you remember the summary phrase for Matthew? **that mercy which rules**; and the summary phrase for Mark? **that humility which serves**; well, the summary phrase for Luke is **that compassion which saves**! That's the spirit of the man of this gospel, b&s, He's the perfect priest that we all so desperately need.

In the words of a hymn:

Now let our humble faith behold,  
Thy great high priest above,  
And celebrate His constant care  
And sympathetic love.