

Jesus' Sermon on the Plain (see 6.17), 6.20-49

²⁰ Looking at his disciples, he said: (A: THE PROPHETIC SECTION: 4 Blessings and Woes)

- 1 "Blessed are you who are *poor*, for yours is the kingdom of God.
- 2 Blessed are you who *hunger* now, for you will be satisfied.
- 3 Blessed are you who *weep* now, for you will laugh.
- 4 Blessed are you when *men hate you*, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. *For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.*
- 1 But woe to you who are *rich*, for you have already received your comfort.
- 2 Woe to you who are *well fed* now, for you will go hungry.
- 3 Woe to you who *laugh* now, for you will mourn and weep.
- 4 Woe to you when all *men speak well of you*, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets.

²⁷ "But I tell you who hear me: (B: THE PARAENETIC SECTION: 8 Commands; a Summary Command; and 8 Commands with Promises attached)

- 1 "*Love your enemies.*
- 2 (*D*)o good to those who hate you.
- 3 (*B*)less those who curse you.
- 4 (*P*)ray for those who ill-treat you.
- 5 If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also.
- 6 If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic.
- 7 *Give* to everyone who asks you.
- 8 (*A*)nd if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back."
- 1 "Do to others as you would have them do to you.
- 2 If you *love* those who love you, what credit is that to you?
Even 'sinners' love those who love them.
- 3 And if you *do good* to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you?
Even 'sinners' do that.
- 4 And if you *lend* to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you?
Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners', expecting to be repaid in full."
- 1 "*But love your enemies.*
- 2 (*A*)nd *do* good to them.
- 3 (*A*)nd *lend* to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.
- 4 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.
- 5 Do not judge, and you will not be judged.
- 6 Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned.
- 7 Forgive, and you will be forgiven.
- 8 *Give*, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

³⁹ He also told them a parable: (A': THE PARABOLIC SECTION: 4 Stories of Blessing and Woe)

- 1 "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.
- 2 "(And) why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.
- 1 "(For) no good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognised by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thorn-bushes, or grapes from briars. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.
- 2 "(And) why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. He is like a man, building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When the flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete." (NIV with my amendments from the Greek in parentheses.)

Central to **Section 4 of Luke's Gospel (5.1-8.21)** is Luke's construction of this sermon (above) which is a three-part chiasm, ABA'.

Each side of this central 'sermon' are four pairs of parts: hence the structure of Section 4 can be represented by:

I(4(AA'));C(ABA');I'(4(AA')).

The theme of **Section 4** is '**From Sinners to Disciples**'. The opposite **Section 4'** (**21.37-22.53**) has as its theme, '**From Disciples to Sinners**'!

Sub-section I is **5.1-6.19**. The Section's theme, '**From Sinners to Disciples**', is introduced in 5.8, in the opening part, 5.1-11, in Simon's words, 'Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a *sinful* man'. The Sub-section as a whole focuses on **the fulfilling of the Law** as it tells what Jesus was doing for people (calling, healing, forgiving sins...). This sub-theme on 'Law' is introduced in 5.14, in the second of the two opening parts, 5.12-16.

The parts are: 5.1-11/12-16; 5.17-26/27-39; 6.1-5/6-11; 6.12-16/17-19

Sub-section I', **7.1-8.21**, continues the theme '**From Sinners to Disciples**' in more stories of what Jesus was doing for people, but its emphasis here is switched now to **Prophets and Prophecy fulfilment**. See again, as above, the second of the two opening parts, 7.11-17, and specifically 7.16.

The parts are: 7.1-10/11-17; 7.18-23/24-35; 7.36-50*/8.1-3; 8.4-18/19-21

(*7.36-50 tells the story of a woman's anointing of Jesus. It may be noted that if Luke had not included this story here in his Section 4, he would most certainly have included it where Mark and Matthew presented it, but in his own opposite Section 4', 21.37-22.53, he could not do this: he was choosing not to include a story of a fine example of discipleship in Section 4'! The uncovering of Luke's structure acquaints us with the way his mind and pen were working on the pieces of gospel tradition that he was finding particularly in Mark, but also, I argue elsewhere, in Matthew too. He does not fear to re-tell the story in his own way for his own literary purposes. Luke's intention from the beginning is to present eternal truth (i.e. eternally useful truth, yes?) rather than historical truth. His prologue attempts the description of this, and demonstrates his difficulty too! This story of 7.36-50 has its parallel, for telling of Jesus' forgiving sins and for telling also of the questioning of onlookers, with 5.17-26. Luke is very definitely in control of his material.

8.1-3 completes the third presentation (of four) with a continuing focus by Luke on woman/women. Discipleship is receiving healing/wholeness from Jesus and offering, in turn, one's help to him.)

It is in the Sermon, **the Central Sub-section C, and essentially in the very middle of it**, that the primary themes of the outer sub-sections meet. We find a comparison of **Sinners and Disciples** and, in the summary commandment of 6.31, a **fulfilling of the Law and the Prophets** (*according to Mt. 7.12*).

It is a carefully crafted Section, carefully crafted like all Luke's Sections. **Section 4** is well constructed with 'fours', 'twos' and 'eights'. Similarly, it does not escape my attention that **Luke's Sections 3 and 3'** have 'threes' in their constructions (three 'testings' in the former, three 'trials' in the latter, and more). It is for reasons of this nature that I view Luke's work as that of a **re-structuring and re-mythologising** of the contents of Mark's and Matthew's Gospels.

The Sermon above is presented in the New International Version, to show the **contents and form** of the sermon primarily. In parentheses I add words from the Greek text that better express Luke's connections between pieces, and some capital letters.

LUKE'S GOSPEL

Luke is writing in an 'orderly way (Lk.1.1-4). He is a literary artist who, like all the Gospel writers, puts 'true meaning' before 'historical truth'. He uses chiasm (1-5,C,5'-1') at three levels in all (in shaping his gospel, his central teaching and his genealogy of Jesus); he values it as a mnemonic. For 'Gentiles', this Gospel is a re-structured and amended version of Mark's and Matthew's Gospels and it includes additional material. The presentation begins, turns and ends on activities happening, or about to happen in Jerusalem. And in the opening scenes 'Law' and 'Grace' have their contrasting roles, as also at the Gospel's centre and at its end. (Paul would have approved of this!)

Section 1: 1.1-80 Prologue; Angel's Announcements: Promises of Births; (80 verses) **Belief and Disbelief; John the Baptist's Birth**

A(Prologue: aa')B(AA')B'(AA') 1.1-2/3-4; 5-25/26-38; 39-56/57-80

Section 2: 2.1-52 Jesus' Birth; Salvation

(52) I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 2.1-20; 21-40; 41-52

Section 3: 3.1-4.44 Jesus' Baptism, Genealogy, Three Trials & Rejection

(82) I(ABA')C(ABA')I'(ABA') 3.1-20; 21-4.30; 31-44

Section 4: 5.1-8.21 'Sinners to Disciples'

(159) I(4(AA'))C(ABA')I'(4(AA')) 5.1-6.19; 20-49; 7.1-8.21

Section 5: 8.22-9.43a Jesus' Identity: 'the Christ', His 'Death',

(77.5) **Glorious Return as Judge, His Glory: Disciples' Purpose**

I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 8.22-56; 9.1-22; 23-43a

Section C: 9.43b-19.48 Jesus' Journey to Jerusalem

(436.5) **(I) Setting Out; Fate of Jesus & Cities; 3 'Disciples'?**

I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 9.43b-50; 51-10.20; 21-24

(C) His Teachings on 'the Way' 10.25-18.30 - - -

(I') Arriving; Fate of Jesus & Jerusalem; 3 'Servants'?

I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 18.31-19.10; 11-28; 29-48

Section 5': 20.1-21.36 Jesus in the Temple: His 'Death',

(83) **'the Christ', Return as Judge in Glory; Disciples' Purpose**

I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 20.1-19; 20-21.4; 5-36

Section 4': 21.37-22.53 'Disciples to Sinners'; Jesus' Arrest

(51.5) I(2(AA'))C(ABA')I'(2(AA')) 21.37-22.13; 14-30; 31-53

Section 3': 22.54-23.25 Jesus' Three Trials & Denials/Rejections

(42) I(ABA')C(ABA')I'(ABA') 22.54-62; 63-23.12; 13-25

Section 2': 23.26-56a Jesus' Death; Salvation

(29.5) I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 23.26-31; 32-49; 50-56a

Section 1': 23.56b-24.53 Angels Announce, 'Jesus is Risen!';

(53.5) **Belief & Disbelief; a New Promise (of Jesus)**

A(AA')B(AA')B'(AA') 23.56b-24.7/8-11; 13-27/28-35; 36-43/44-53

1 Inheriting Eternal Life: Law and Love

ABB' 10.25-30a; 30b-37; 38-42

2 Prayer: Right Praying, Persistence, Holy Spirit is Given

ABB' 11.1-4; 5-8; 9-13

3 The Kingdom of God: what is Internal is Important

ABB' 11.14-36; 37-54; 12.1-12

4 Earthly/Heavenly Riches: the Coming of the Son of Man

ABB' 12.13-21; 22-34; 35-48

5 Divisions, Warning & Prudence, Repentance

ABB' 12.49-59; 13.1-5; 6-9

C Kingdom: Entry; Jerusalem: Jesus is to be killed there

I(ABB')C(AA')I'(ABB') 13.10-30; 13.31-33/34-35; 14.1-24

5' Divisions, Warning & Prudence, Repentance

ABB' 14.25-35; 15.1-10; 11-32

4' Earthly/Heavenly Riches: Coming Judgement

ABB' 16.1-13; 14-18; 19-31

3' The Kingdom of God: is Within, not Coming with Signs

ABB' 17.1-10; 11-19; 20-37

2' Prayer: Persistence, Right Praying, Receiving Kingdom

ABB' 18.1-8; 9-14; 15-17

1' Inheriting Eternal Life: Law and Love

ABB' 18.18-22; 23-27; 28-30

Luke's writing style is ABB' where A is introductory, B is the first development and B' is the second and concluding development. Luke's sectional style is ICI' where three parts are in chiasm, a centre part with balancing parts each side. His sub-sectional style exhibits variation: ABA' which is like ICI' but at a smaller scale; AA' which is like ABA' but without the centre B, where two parts are in simple balance; and ABB' which is the same as his writing style.