

Saint Joseph Edition of
**THE NEW
AMERICAN BIBLE**

Revised Edition



Translated from the Original Languages
with Critical Use of All the Ancient Sources

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CATHOLIC BOOK PUBLISHING CORP.
NEW JERSEY

¹⁶She, meanwhile, went home to her mother-in-law, who asked, "How did things go, my daughter?" So she told her all the man had done for her, ¹⁷and concluded, "He gave me these six measures of barley and said, 'Do not go back to your mother-in-law empty.'" ¹⁸Naomi then said, "Wait here, my daughter, until you learn what happens, for the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today."

CHAPTER 4

Boaz Marries Ruth. ¹Boaz went to the gate* and took a seat there. Along came the other redeemer^a of whom he had spoken. Boaz called to him by name, "Come, sit here." And he did so. ²Then Boaz picked out ten of the elders* of the town and asked them to sit nearby. When they had done this, ³he said to the other redeemer: "Naomi, who has come back from the plateau of Moab, is putting up for sale the piece of land that belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. ⁴* So I thought I would inform you. Before those here present, including the elders of my people, purchase the field; act as redeemer.^b But if you do not want to do it, tell me so, that I may know, for no one has a right of redemption prior to yours, and mine is next." He answered, "I will act as redeemer."

⁵* Boaz continued, "When you acquire the field from Naomi, you also acquire responsibility for Ruth the Moabite,^c the widow of the late heir, to raise up a family for the deceased on his estate." ⁶The redeemer replied, "I cannot exercise my right of redemption for that would endanger my own estate. You do it in my place, for I cannot." ⁷^dNow it used to be the custom in Israel

e. [3:17] Ru 1:21.—a. [4:1] Ru 3:12.—b. [4:4] Lv 25:25.—c. [4:5] Ru 3:13.—d. [4:7] Dt 25:9.—e. [4:11] Gn 29:31—30:24; 35:16—19.—f. [4:17] Lk 1:58.

4:1 The gate of an Israelite town was the place where commercial and other legal matters were dealt with in publicly witnessed fashion.

4:2 *Ten of the elders:* to serve as judges in legal matters as well as witnesses of the settlement of business affairs; cf. Dt 25:7–9.

4:4 Although the laws governing inheritance by Israelite widows are not specified in the Bible, Naomi seems to have the right of disposal of a piece of Elimelech's land. The redemption custom in Lv 25:25 would then guide the procedure.

4:5–6 Although redemption and levirate practices are not otherwise linked in the Bible, they belong in the same area of need. Boaz claims that buying Elimelech's field obligates the other redeemer to produce an heir for Mahlon, who would then inherit the land. That would jeopardize this redeemer's overall holdings, since he would lose the land he had paid for. He can afford the first step but not the second, and cedes his responsibility to Boaz, who is willing to do both.

that, to make binding a contract of redemption or exchange, one party would take off a sandal* and give it to the other. This was the form of attestation in Israel. ⁸So the other redeemer, in saying to Boaz, "Acquire it for yourself," drew off his sandal. ⁹Boaz then said to the elders and to all the people, "You are witnesses today that I have acquired from Naomi all the holdings of Elimelech, Chilion and Mahlon. ¹⁰I also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, as my wife, in order to raise up a family for her late husband on his estate, so that the name of the deceased may not perish from his people and his place. Do you witness this today?" ¹¹^eAll those at the gate, including the elders, said, "We do. May the LORD make this woman come into your house like Rachel and Leah, who between them built up the house of Israel. Prosper in Ephrathah! Bestow a name in Bethlehem!" ¹²With the offspring the LORD will give you from this young woman, may your house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah.*^f

¹³Boaz took Ruth. When they came together as husband and wife, the LORD enabled her to conceive and she bore a son. ¹⁴Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed is the LORD who has not failed to provide you today with a redeemer. May he become famous in Israel!" ¹⁵He will restore your life and be the support of your old age, for his mother is the daughter-in-law who loves you. She is worth more to you than seven sons!" ¹⁶Naomi took the boy, cradled him* against her breast, and cared for him. ¹⁷The neighbor women joined the celebration: "A son has been born to Naomi!"^g They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

4:7 *Take off a sandal:* the legislation in Dt 25:8–10 provides that if a "redeemer" refuses to carry out the obligation of marrying his brother's wife, the woman shall strip off his sandal as a gesture of insult. In later years, when the obligation of carrying out this function of the "redeemer" was no longer keenly felt, the removal of the sandal may have become a formalized way of renouncing the rights/obligations of the "redeemer," as in this text.

4:12 Gn 38 contains a story about Tamar similar to Ruth's in levirate marriage. Judah, under less laudable circumstances, fulfills the same role as Boaz will, and Perez, son of Judah and Tamar, perpetuates the line. Thus two non-Israelite women, Tamar and Ruth, are important links in David's genealogy.

4:16 *Cradled him:* the child belongs to Naomi in the sense that he now becomes the redeemer in the family, as stated in 4:14. This tender act by Naomi is not necessarily adoptive and differs from the relationship in Gn 30:3; cf. Nm 11:12. Naomi now has a "boy" to replace her two lost "boys" in 1:5.

^{18g}These are the descendants of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron,^h ¹⁹Hezron was the father of Ram, Ram was the father of

g. [4:18–22] 1 Chr 2:4–15; Mt 1:3–6.—h. [4:18] Gn 46:12; Nm 26:21; 1 Chr 4:1.—i. [4:20] Ex 6:23; Nm 1:7; 2:3; 7:12–17; 10:14.—j. [4:22] 1 Sm 16:2–13.

Amminadab,²⁰ⁱ Amminadab was the father of Nahshon, Nahshon was the father of Salma,²¹ Salma was the father of Boaz, Boaz was the father of Obed,^{22j} Obed was the father of Jesse, and Jesse became the father of David.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL

These books describe the rise and development of kingship in Israel. Samuel is a pivotal figure. He bridges the gap between the period of the Judges and the monarchy, and guides Israel's transition to kingship. A Deuteronomistic editor presents both positive and negative traditions about the monarchy, portraying it both as evidence of Israel's rejection of the Lord as their sovereign (1 Sm 8:6–22; 12:1–25) and as part of God's plan to deliver the people (1 Sm 9:16; 10:17–27; 2 Sm 7:8–17). Samuel's misgivings about abuse of royal power foreshadow the failures and misdeeds of Saul and David and the failures of subsequent Israelite kings.

Although the events described in 1 and 2 Samuel move from the last of the judges to the decline of David's reign and the beginning of a legendary "Golden Age" under Solomon's rule, this material does not present either a continuous history or a systematic account of this period. The author/editor developed a narrative timeline around freely composed speeches, delivered by prophets like Samuel (e.g., 1 Sm 15:10–31; 28:15–19) and Nathan (2 Sm 12:1–12), who endorse Deuteronomistic perspectives regarding the establishment of the monarchy, the relationship between worship and obedience, and the divine covenant established with the house of David.

These books include independent blocks (e.g., the Ark Narrative [1 Sm 4:1–7:1], Saul's rise to power [1 Sm 9:1–11:15], David's ascendancy over Saul [1 Sm 16–31], the Succession Narrative [2 Sm 9–20; 1 Kgs 1–2]), which the editor shaped into three narrative cycles, the last two marked by transitional passages in 1 Sm 13:1 and 2 Sm 1:1. Each section focuses on a major figure in the development of the monarchy: Samuel, the reluctant king maker (1 Sm 1–12); Saul, the king whom the Lord rejects (1 Sm 13–31); David, the king after the Lord's own heart (2 Sm 1–24). A common theme unites these narratives: Israel's God acts justly, prospering those who remain faithful and destroying those who reject his ways (1 Sm 2:9). Along with the rest of the Deuteronomistic History, the Books of Samuel become an object lesson for biblical Israel as it tries to re-establish its religious identity after the destruction of Jerusalem and the loss of its homeland (587/586 B.C.).

The contents of the Books of Samuel may be divided as follows:

- I. The Last Judges, Eli and Samuel (1 Sm 1:1–7:17)
- II. Establishment of the Monarchy (1 Sm 8:1–12:25)
- III. Saul and David (1 Sm 13:1–2 Sm 2:7)
- IV. The Reign of David (2 Sm 2:8–20:26)
- V. Appendixes (2 Sm 21:1–24:25)

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL

I. THE LAST JUDGES, ELI AND SAMUEL

CHAPTER 1

Elkanah and His Family at Shiloh. ¹There was a certain man from Ramathaim, a

a. [1:1] 1 Chr 6:19–20.

Zuphite from the hill country of Ephraim. His name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.^a ²He had two wives, one named Hannah, the other Peninnah; Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.³ Each year this man went up from

Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.^b

⁷This came about because the Israelites sinned against the LORD, their God, who had brought them up from the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. They venerated other gods,⁸ they followed the rites of the nations whom the LORD had dispossessed before the Israelites and those that the kings of Israel had practiced. ⁹They adopted unlawful practices toward the LORD, their God. They built high places in all their cities, from guard post to garrisoned town. ¹⁰They set up pillars and asherahs* for themselves on every high hill and under every green tree. ¹¹They burned incense there, on all the high places, like the nations whom the LORD had sent into exile at their coming. They did evil things that provoked the LORD,¹² and served idols, although the LORD had told them: You must not do this.

¹³^dThe LORD warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and seer: Give up your evil ways and keep my commandments and statutes, in accordance with the entire law which I enjoined on your ancestors and which I sent you by my servants the prophets. ¹⁴But they did not listen. They grew as stiff-necked as their ancestors, who had not believed in the LORD, their God.^e ¹⁵They rejected his statutes, the covenant he had made with their ancestors, and the warnings he had given them. They followed emptiness and became empty; they followed the surrounding nations whom the LORD had commanded them not to imitate.^f ¹⁶They abandoned all the commandments of the LORD, their God: they made for themselves two molten calves; they made an asherah; they bowed down to all the host of heaven; they served Baal.^g ¹⁷^hThey immolated their sons and daughters by fire. They practiced augury and divination. They surrendered themselves to doing what was evil in the LORD's sight, and provoked him.

¹⁸ⁱThe LORD became enraged, and removed them from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah was left. ¹⁹Even the people of Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD, their God, but followed the rites practiced by Israel. ²⁰So the LORD rejected the entire people of Israel: he afflicted them and delivered them over to plunderers, finally casting them from his presence.^j ²¹When he tore Israel away from the house of David,

they made Jeroboam, son of Nebat, king; but Jeroboam lured the Israelites away from the LORD, causing them to commit a great sin.^k

²²The Israelites imitated Jeroboam in all the sins he committed; they would not depart from them.

²³Finally, the LORD removed Israel from his presence, just as he had declared through all his servants, the prophets. Thus Israel went into exile from their native soil to Assyria until this very day.

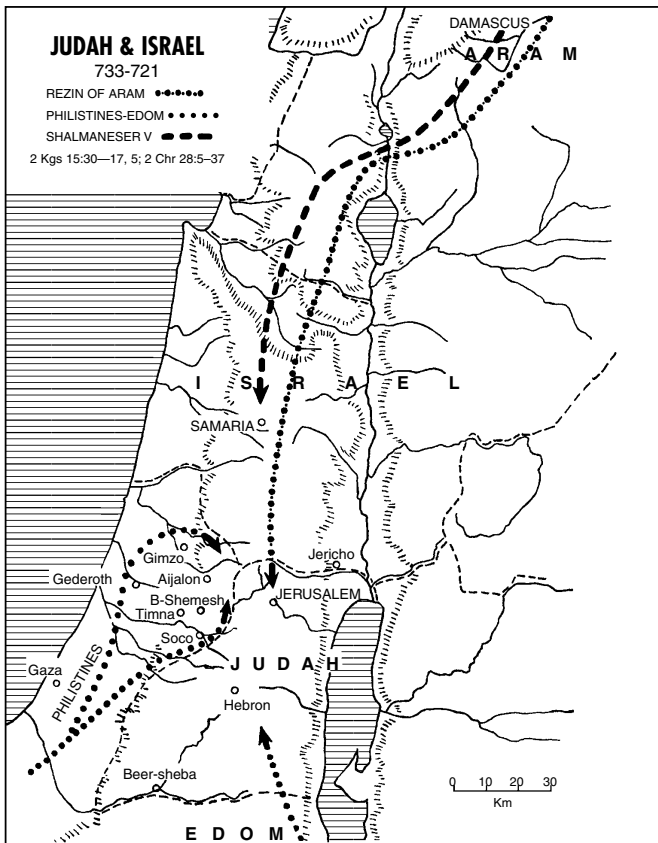
Foreigners Deported to Israel. ²⁴The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and settled them in the cities of Samaria in place of the Israelites. They took possession of Samaria and dwelt in its cities. ²⁵When they first settled there, they did not venerate the LORD, so he sent lions among them that killed some of them. ²⁶A report reached the king of Assyria: "The nations you deported and settled in the cities of Samaria do not know the proper worship of the god of the land, so he has sent lions among them that are killing them, since they do not know the law of the god of the land."²⁷ The king of Assyria gave the order, "Send back some of the priests you deported, to go there and settle, to teach them the proper worship of the god of the land."²⁸ So one of the priests who had been deported from Samaria returned and settled in Bethel, and began to teach them how to venerate the LORD.

²⁹Thus each of these nations continued to make its own gods, setting them up in the shrines of the high places the Samaritans had made: each nation in the cities in which they dwelt. ³⁰The Babylonians made Sukkot-Benot;* the people of Cuth made Nergal; those from Hamath made Ashima;³¹ those from Avva made Nibhaz and Tartak; and those from Sepharvaim immolated their children by fire to their city gods, King Hadad and King Anu. ³²At the same time, they were venerating the LORD, appointing from their own number priests for the high

b. [17:6] 2 Kgs 18:10–11; Tb 1:2. — c. [17:8–12] Ex 23:24; 34:13; Dt 12:2. — d. [17:13] Jer 25:5. — e. [17:14] Dt 9:13. — f. [17:15] Jer 2:5. — g. [17:16] Ex 34:13; Dt 4:19; 17:2–3; 1 Kgs 12:28; 16:33. — h. [17:17] Lv 18:21; Dt 18:10. — i. [17:18] Sir 48:15. — j. [17:20] Jer 25:9. — k. [17:21] 1 Kgs 12:20, 26–33; 13:34.

17:10 *Asherahs*: see note on Ex 34:13.

17:30 *Sukkot-Benot*: several of the divine names in vv. 30–31 are problematic or conjectural. Sukkot-Benot is unknown, but the name may have been corrupted from that of Sarpanitu, the consort of the Babylonian god Marduk.



JUDAH AND ISRAEL (733-721) (2 Kgs 15:30—17:5) — (a) Rezin, king of **Aram**, and Pekah, king of **Israel**, join forces to make war against **Judah**, they besiege **Jerusalem** but fail to conquer it; they succeed in carrying away a large number of captives who are mistreated until the prophet Oded obtains their release (2 Kgs 16:1—4; 2 Chr 28:9—15). (b) Ahaz of Judah obtains the intervention of the king of Assyria, Tiglath-pileser II, who conquers **Damascus** in 733—32 and destroys the kingdom of **Aram**; the captives are taken to **Kir** (2 Kgs 16:7—9). (c) In 732, the Edomites profit from the circumstances to retake **Elath** and invade **Judah** (2 Chr 28:17). (d) In 724, the Philistines raid the cities of the foothills and the **Negeb** of Judah, capturing **Beth-shemesh**, **Aijalon**, **Gederoth**, **Soco**, and **Gimzo** (2 Chr 28:18). (e) At the same time Shalmaneser V, king of Assyria, advances against Hoshea of Israel who becomes his vassal and pays tribute; however, Hoshea appeals to the king of Egypt and is imprisoned by the Assyrians (2 Kgs 17:3—5). (f) Shalmaneser V then occupies the whole land and lays siege to Samaria (2 Kgs 17:5).

11 Upon you I was thrust from the womb;
since my mother bore me you are my
God.^h

12 Do not stay far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is no one to help.ⁱ

II

13 Many bulls* surround me;
fierce bulls of Bashan* encircle me.

14 They open their mouths against me,
lions that rend and roar.^j

15 Like water my life drains away;
all my bones are disjointed.

My heart has become like wax,
it melts away within me.

16 As dry as a potsherd is my throat;
my tongue cleaves to my palate;
you lay me in the dust of death.*

17 Dogs surround me;
a pack of evildoers closes in on me.
They have pierced my hands and my feet

18 I can count all my bones.^k
They stare at me and gloat;

19 they divide my garments among them;
for my clothing they cast lots.^l

20 But you, LORD, do not stay far off;
my strength, come quickly to help me.

21 Deliver my soul from the sword,
my life from the grip of the dog.

22 Save me from the lion's mouth,
my poor life from the horns of wild
bulls.^m

III

23 Then I will proclaim your name to my
brethren;

in the assembly I will praise you.*ⁿ

24 "You who fear the LORD, give praise!
All descendants of Jacob, give honor;
show reverence, all descendants of
Israel!

h. [22:11] Ps 71:6; Is 44:2; 46:3.—i. [22:12] Ps 35:22; 38:22; 71:12.—j. [22:14] Ps 17:12; Jb 4:10; 1 Pt 5:8.—k. [22:18] Ps 109:24.—l. [22:19] Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Lk 23:34; Jn 19:24.—m. [22:22] Ps 7:2-3; 17:12; 35:17; 57:5; 58:7; 2 Tm 4:17.—n. [22:23] Ps 26:12; 35:18; 40:10; 109:30; 149:1; 2 Sm 22:50; Heb 2:12.—o. [22:27] Ps 23:5; 69:33.—p. [22:28] Ps 86:9; Tb 13:11; Is 45:22; 52:10; Zec 14:16.—q. [22:29] Ps 103:19; Ob 21; Zec 14:9.—r. [22:32] Ps 48:14-15; 71:18; 78:6; 102:19; Is 53:10.—a. [23:1] Ps 80:2; 95:7; 100:3; Dt 2:7.—b. [23:3] Prv 4:11.

22:13-14 **Bulls:** the enemies of the psalmist are also portrayed in less-than-human form, as wild animals (cf. Ps 22:17, 21-22). **Bashan:** a grazing land northeast of the Sea of Galilee, famed for its cattle, cf. Dt 32:14; Ez 39:18; Am 4:1.

22:16 **The dust of death:** the netherworld, the domain of the dead.

22:23 **In the assembly I will praise you:** the person who offered a thanksgiving sacrifice in the Temple recounted to the

25 For he has not spurned or disdained
the misery of this poor wretch,
Did not turn away* from me,
but heard me when I cried out.

26 I will offer praise in the great assembly;
my vows I will fulfill before those who
fear him.

27 The poor* will eat their fill;
those who seek the LORD will offer
praise.
May your hearts enjoy life forever!"^o

IV

28 All the ends of the earth
will remember and turn to the LORD;
All the families of nations
will bow low before him.^p

29 For kingship belongs to the LORD,
the ruler over the nations.^q

30* All who sleep in the earth
will bow low before God;
All who have gone down into the dust
will kneel in homage.

31 And I will live for the LORD;
my descendants will serve you.

32 The generation to come will be told of the
LORD,
that they may proclaim to a people yet
unborn
the deliverance you have brought.^r

PSALM 23*

The Lord, Shepherd and Host

1 A psalm of David.

I

The LORD is my shepherd;*
there is nothing I lack.^a

2 In green pastures he makes me lie down;
to still waters he leads me;

3^b he restores my soul.

other worshippers the favor received from God and invited them to share in the sacrificial banquet. The final section (Ps 22:24-32) may be a summary or a citation of the psalmist's poem of praise.

22:25 **Turn away:** lit., "hides his face from me," an important metaphor for God withdrawing from someone, e.g., Mt 3:4; Is 8:17; Ps 27:9; 69:18; 88:15.

22:27 **The poor:** originally the poor, who were dependent on God; the term ("anawim") came to include the religious sense of "humble, pious, devout."

22:30 Hebrew unclear. The translation assumes that all on earth (Ps 22:27-28) and under the earth (Ps 22:29) will worship God.

Psalm 23 God's loving care for the psalmist is portrayed under the figures of a shepherd for the flock (Ps 23:1-4) and a host's generosity toward a guest (Ps 23:5-6). The imagery of both sections is drawn from traditions of the exodus (Is 40:11; 49:10; Jer 31:10).

23:1 **My shepherd:** God as good shepherd is common in both the Old Testament and the New Testament (Ez 34:11-16; Jn 10:11-18).

CHAPTER 4

The Parable of the Sower. ¹* On another occasion ^a he began to teach by the sea.* A very large crowd gathered around him so that he got into a boat on the sea and sat down. And the whole crowd was beside the sea on land. ^b² And he taught them at length in parables, and in the course of his instruction he said to them, ³* “Hear this! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Other seed fell on rocky ground where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep. ⁶ And when the sun rose, it was scorched and it withered for lack of roots. ⁷ Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it and it produced no grain. ⁸ And some seed fell on rich soil and produced fruit. It came up and grew and yielded thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.” ⁹ He added, “Whoever has ears to hear ought to hear.”

The Purpose of the Parables. ¹⁰ And when he was alone, those present along with the Twelve questioned him about the parables. ¹¹* He answered them, “The mystery of the kingdom of God has been granted to you. But to those outside everything comes in parables, ¹² so that

‘they may look and see but not perceive, and hear and listen but not understand, in order that they may not be converted and be forgiven.’” ^c

¹³* Jesus said to them, “Do you not understand this parable?^d Then how will you understand any of the parables?^e ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ These are the ones on the path where the word is sown. As soon as they hear, Satan comes at once and takes away the word sown in them. ¹⁶ And these are the ones sown on rocky ground who, when they hear the word, receive it at once with joy. ¹⁷ But they have no root; they last only for a time. Then when tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ¹⁸ Those sown among thorns are another sort. They are the people who hear the word, ¹⁹ but worldly anxiety, the lure of riches, and the craving for other things intrude and choke the word, and it bears no fruit. ²⁰ But those sown on rich soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”

Parable of the Lamp. ²¹ ^e He said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a bushel basket or under a bed, and not to be placed on a lampstand?^f ²² For there is nothing hidden except to be made visible; nothing is secret except to come to light.” ²³ Anyone who has ears to hear ought to hear.” ²⁴ He also told them, “Take care what you hear. The measure with which you measure will be measured out to you, and still more will be given to you. ²⁵ To the one who has, more will be given; from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.” ^g

Seed Grows of Itself. ²⁶ He said, “This is how it is with the kingdom of God;* it is as if a man were to scatter seed^j on the land ²⁷ and would sleep and rise night and day and the seed would sprout and grow, he knows not how. ²⁸ Of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. ²⁹ And when the

a. [4:1-12] Mt 13:1-13; Lk 8:4-10.—b. [4:1] 2:13; Lk 5:1.—c. [4:12] Is 6:9; Jn 12:40; Acts 28:26; Rom 11:8.—d. [4:13-20] Mt 13:18-23; Lk 8:11-15.—e. [4:21-25] Lk 8:16-18.—f. [4:21] Mt 5:15; Lk 11:33.—g. [4:22] Mt 10:26; Lk 12:2.—h. [4:24] Mt 7:2; Lk 6:38.—i. [4:25] Mt 13:12; Lk 19:26.—j. [4:26-29] Jas 5:7.

4:1-34 *In parables* (v. 2): see note on Mt 13:3. The use of parables is typical of Jesus’ enigmatic method of teaching the crowds (vv. 2-9, 12) as compared with the interpretation of the parables he gives to his disciples (vv. 10-25, 33-34) to each group according to its capacity to understand (vv. 9-11). The key feature of the parable at hand is the sowing of the seed (v. 3), representing the breakthrough of the kingdom of God into the world. The various types of soil refer to the diversity of response accorded the word of God (vv. 4-7). The climax of the parable is the harvest of thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold, indicating the consummation of the kingdom (v. 8). Thus both the present and the future action of God, from the initiation to the fulfillment of the kingdom, is presented through this and other parables (vv. 26-29, 30-32).

4:1 *By the sea*: the shore of the Sea of Galilee or a boat near the shore (2:13; 3:7-8) is the place where Mark depicts Jesus teaching the crowds. By contrast the mountain is the scene of Jesus at prayer (6:46) or in the process of forming his disciples (3:13; 9:2).

4:3-8 See note on Mt 13:3-8.

4:11-12 These verses are to be viewed against their background in 3:6, 22 concerning the unbelief and opposition Jesus encountered in his ministry. It is against this background that the distinction in Jesus’ method becomes clear of presenting the kingdom to the disbelieving crowd in one manner and to the disciples in another. To the former it is presented in parables and the truth remains hidden; for the latter the parable is interpreted and the mystery is partially revealed because of their faith; see notes on Mt 13:11 and Mt 13:13.

4:13-20 See note on Mt 13:18-23.

4:26-29 Only Mark records the parable of the seed’s growth. Sower and harvester are the same. The emphasis is on the power of the seed to grow of itself without human intervention (v. 27). Mysteriously it produces *blade* and *ear* and *full grain* (v. 28). Thus the kingdom of God initiated by Jesus in proclaiming the word develops quietly yet powerfully until it is fully established by him at the final judgment (v. 29); cf. Rev 14:15.

grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come.”

The Mustard Seed. ^{30 k} He said, “To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. ^{32 *} But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade.” ³³ With many such parables ^l he spoke the word to them as they were able to understand it. ³⁴ Without parables he did not speak to them, but to his own disciples he explained everything in private.

The Calming of a Storm at Sea. ^{35 *} On that day, as evening drew on, he said to them, “Let us cross to the other side.” ^m ³⁶ Leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat just as he was. And other boats were with him. ³⁷ A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up. ³⁸ Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” ³⁹ He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Quiet! Be still!”* The wind ceased and there was great calm. ⁴⁰ Then he asked them, “Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?”

k. [4:30-32] Mt 13:31-32; Lk 13:18-19.—l. [4:33-34] Mt 13:34.—m. [4:35-40] Mt 8:18, 23-37; Lk 8:22-25.—n. [4:41] 1:27.—a. [5:1-20] Mt 8:28-34; Lk 8:26-39.—b. [5:9] Mt 12:45; Lk 8:2; 11:26.

4:32 The universality of the kingdom of God is indicated here; cf. Ez 17:23; 31:6; Dn 4:17-19.

4:35-5:43 After the chapter on parables, Mark narrates four miracle stories: 4:35-41; 5:1-20; and two joined together in 5:21-43. See also notes on Mt 8:23-34 and Mt 9:8-26.

4:39 *Quiet! Be still!*: as in the case of silencing a demon (1:25), Jesus rebukes the wind and subdues the turbulence of the sea by a mere word; see note on Mt 8:26.

4:41 Jesus is here depicted as exercising power over wind and sea. In the Christian community this event was seen as a sign of Jesus' saving presence amid persecutions that threatened its existence.

5:1 *The territory of the Gerasenes*: the reference is to pagan territory; cf. Is 65:1. Another reading is “Gadarenes”; see note on Mt 8:28.

5:2-6 The man was an outcast from society, dominated by unclean spirits (vv. 8, 13), living among the tombs. The prostration before Jesus (v. 6) indicates Jesus' power over evil spirits.

5:7 *What have you to do with me?*: cf. 1:24 and see note on Jn 2:4.

5:9 *Legion is my name*: the demons were numerous and the condition of the possessed man was extremely serious; cf. Mt 12:45.

5:11 *Herd of swine*: see note on Mt 8:30.

^{41 *} They were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?”

CHAPTER 5

The Healing of the Gerasene Demoniac.

^{1 *} They came to the other side of the sea, to the territory of the Gerasenes. ² When he got out of the boat, at once a man* from the tombs who had an unclean spirit met him. ³ The man had been dwelling among the tombs, and no one could restrain him any longer, even with a chain. ⁴ In fact, he had frequently been bound with shackles and chains, but the chains had been pulled apart by him and the shackles smashed, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵ Night and day among the tombs and on the hillsides he was always crying out and bruising himself with stones. ⁶ Catching sight of Jesus from a distance, he ran up and prostrated himself before him, ⁷ crying out in a loud voice, “What have you to do with me,* Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me!” ⁸ (He had been saying to him, “Unclean spirit, come out of the man!”) ^{9 *} He asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “Legion is my name. There are many of us.” ^b ¹⁰ And he pleaded earnestly with him not to drive them away from that territory.

¹¹ Now a large herd of swine* was feeding there on the hillside. ¹² And they pleaded with him, “Send us into the swine. Let us enter them.” ¹³ And he let them, and the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine. The herd of about two thousand rushed down a steep bank into the sea, where they were drowned. ¹⁴ The swineherds ran away and reported the incident in the town and throughout the countryside. And people came out to see what had happened. ¹⁵ As they approached Jesus, they caught sight of the man who had been possessed by Legion, sitting there clothed and in his right mind. And they were seized with fear. ¹⁶ Those who witnessed the incident explained to them what had happened to the possessed man and to the swine. ¹⁷ Then they began to beg him to leave their district. ¹⁸ As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed pleaded to remain with him. ¹⁹ But he would not permit him but told him

rial wealth before the service of God and his people (6:24–26; 12:13–21; 16:13–15, 19–31; 18:9–14, 15–25; cf. 1:50–53). No gospel writer is more concerned than Luke with the mercy and compassion of Jesus (7:41–43; 10:29–37; 13:6–9; 15:11–32). No gospel writer is more concerned with the role of the Spirit in the life of Jesus and the Christian disciple (1:35, 41; 2:25–27; 4:1, 14, 18; 10:21; 11:13; 24:49), with the importance of prayer (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:28; 11:1–13; 18:1–8), or with Jesus' concern for women (7:11–17, 36–50; 8:2–3; 10:38–42). While Jesus calls all humanity to repent (5:32; 10:13; 11:32; 13:1–5; 15:7–10; 16:30; 17:3–4; 24:47), he is particularly demanding of those who would be his disciples. Of them he demands absolute and total detachment from family and material possessions (9:57–62; 12:32–34; 14:25–35). To all who respond in faith and repentance to the word Jesus preaches, he brings salvation (2:30–32; 3:6; 7:50; 8:48, 50; 17:19; 19:9) and peace (2:14; 7:50; 8:48; 19:38, 42) and life (10:25–28; 18:26–30).

Early Christian tradition, from the late second century on, identifies the author of this gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles as Luke, a Syrian from Antioch, who is mentioned in the New Testament in Col 4:14, Phlm 24 and 2 Tm 4:11. The prologue of the gospel makes it clear that Luke is not part of the first generation of Christian disciples but is himself dependent upon the traditions he received from those who were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word (1:2). His two-volume work marks him as someone who was highly literate both in the Old Testament traditions according to the Greek versions and in Hellenistic Greek writings.

Among the likely sources for the composition of this gospel (1:3) were the Gospel of Mark, a written collection of sayings of Jesus known also to the author of the Gospel of Matthew (Q; see Introduction to Matthew), and other special traditions that were used by Luke alone among the gospel writers. Some hold that Luke used Mark only as a complementary source for rounding out the material he took from other traditions. Because of its dependence on the Gospel of Mark and because details in Luke's Gospel (13:35a; 19:43–44; 21:20; 23:28–31) imply that the author was acquainted with the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, the Gospel of Luke is dated by most scholars after that date; many propose A.D. 80–90 as the time of composition.

Luke's consistent substitution of Greek names for the Aramaic or Hebrew names occurring in his sources (e.g., Lk 23:33; Mk 15:22; Lk 18:41; Mk 10:51), his omission from the gospel of specifically Jewish Christian concerns found in his sources (e.g., Mk 7:1–23), his interest in Gentile Christians (2:30–32; 3:6, 38; 4:16–30; 13:28–30; 14:15–24; 17:11–19; 24:47–48), and his incomplete knowledge of Palestinian geography, customs, and practices are among the characteristics of this gospel that suggest that Luke was a non-Palestinian writing to a non-Palestinian audience that was largely made up of Gentile Christians.

The principal divisions of the Gospel according to Luke are the following:

- I. The Prologue (1:1–4)
- II. The Infancy Narrative (1:5–2:52)
- III. The Preparation for the Public Ministry (3:1–4:13)
- IV. The Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)
- V. The Journey to Jerusalem: Luke's Travel Narrative (9:51–19:27)
- VI. The Teaching Ministry in Jerusalem (19:28–21:38)
- VII. The Passion Narrative (22:1–23:56)
- VIII. The Resurrection Narrative (24:1–53)

I: THE PROLOGUE*

CHAPTER 1

¹ Since many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events that have been fulfilled among us, ^a ² just as those who were eyewitnesses from the beginning and ministers of the word have handed them down to us, ^b ³ I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received.

II: THE INFANCY NARRATIVE*

Announcement of the Birth of John. ⁵ In the days of Herod, King of Judea,* there was a priest named Zechariah of the priestly division of Abijah; his wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ^c ⁶ Both were righteous in the eyes of God, observing all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly. ⁷ But they had no child,* because Elizabeth was barren

a. [1:1-4] Acts 1:1; 1 Cor 15:3.—b. [1:2] 24:48; Jn 15:27; Acts 1:21-22.—c. [1:5] 1 Chr 24:10.—d. [1:7] Gn 18:11; Jgs 13:2-5; 1 Sm 1:5-6.—e. [1:9] Ex 30:7.—f. [1:13] 1:57, 60, 63; Mt 1:20-21.—g. [1:15] 7:33; Nm 6:1-21; Jgs 13:4; 1 Sm 1:11 LXX.

1:1-4 The Gospel according to Luke is the only one of the synoptic gospels to begin with a literary prologue. Making use of a formal, literary construction and vocabulary, the author writes the prologue in imitation of Hellenistic Greek writers and, in so doing, relates his story about Jesus to contemporaneous Greek and Roman literature. Luke is not only interested in the words and deeds of Jesus, but also in the larger context of the birth, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus as the fulfillment of the promises of God in the Old Testament. As a second- or third-generation Christian, Luke acknowledges his debt to earlier *eyewitnesses* and *ministers of the word*, but claims that his contribution to this developing tradition is a complete and accurate account, told in an orderly manner, and intended to provide *Theophilus* ("friend of God," literally) and other readers with certainty about earlier teachings they have received.

1:5-2:52 Like the Gospel according to Matthew, this gospel opens with an infancy narrative, a collection of stories about the birth and childhood of Jesus. The narrative uses early Christian traditions about the birth of Jesus, traditions about the birth and circumcision of John the Baptist, and canticles such as the Magnificat (1:46-55) and Benedictus (1:67-79), composed of phrases drawn from the Greek Old Testament. It is largely, however, the composition of Luke who writes in imitation of Old Testament birth stories, combining historical and legendary details, literary ornamentation and interpretation of scripture, to answer in advance the question, "Who is Jesus Christ?" The focus of the narrative, therefore, is primarily christological. In this section Luke announces many of the themes that will become prominent in the rest of the gospel: the centrality of Jerusalem and the temple, the journey motif, the universality of salvation, joy and peace, concern for the lowly, the importance of women, the presentation of Jesus as savior, Spirit-guided revelation and prophecy, and the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. The account presents parallel scenes (diptychs) of angelic announcements of the birth of John the Baptist and of Jesus, and of the birth, cir-

and both were advanced in years. ^d ⁸ Once when he was serving as priest in his division's turn before God, ⁹ according to the practice of the priestly service, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense. ¹⁰ Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering, ¹¹ the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right of the altar of incense. ¹² Zechariah was troubled by what he saw, and fear came upon him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid,* Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John. ^f ¹⁴ And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of [the] Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink.* He will be filled with the holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, ^g ¹⁶ and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah* to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a peo-

circumcision, and presentation of John and Jesus. In this parallelism, the ascendancy of Jesus over John is stressed: John is prophet of the Most High (1:76); Jesus is Son of the Most High (1:32). John is great in the sight of the Lord (1:15); Jesus will be Great (a LXX attribute, used absolutely, of God) (1:32). John will go before the Lord (1:16-17); Jesus will be Lord (1:43; 2:11).

1:5 In the days of Herod, King of Judea: Luke relates the story of salvation history to events in contemporary world history. Here and in 3:1-2 he connects his narrative with events in Palestinian history: in 2:1-2 and 3:1 he casts the Jesus story in the light of events of Roman history. Herod the Great, the son of the Idumean Antipater, was declared "King of Judea" by the Roman Senate in 40 B.C., but became the undisputed ruler of Palestine only in 37 B.C. He continued as king until his death in 4 B.C. *Priestly division of Abijah*: a reference to the eighth of the twenty-four divisions of priests who, for a week at a time, twice a year, served in the Jerusalem temple.

1:7 They had no child: though childlessness was looked upon in contemporaneous Judaism as a curse or punishment for sin, it is intended here to present Elizabeth in a situation similar to that of some of the great mothers of important Old Testament figures: Sarah (Gn 15:3; 16:1); Rebekah (Gn 25:21); Rachel (Gn 29:31; 30:1); the mother of Samson and wife of Manah (Jgs 13:2-3); Hannah (1 Sm 1:2).

1:13 Do not be afraid: a stereotyped Old Testament phrase spoken to reassure the recipient of a heavenly vision (Gn 15:1; Jos 1:9; Dn 10:12, 19 and elsewhere in v. 30; 2:10). *You shall name him John*: the name means "Yahweh has shown favor," an indication of John's role in salvation history.

1:15 He will drink neither wine nor strong drink: like Samson (Jgs 13:4-5) and Samuel (1 Sm 1:1 LXX and 4QSam*), John is to be consecrated by Nazirite vow and set apart for the Lord's service.

1:17 He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah: John is to be the messenger sent before Yahweh, as described in Mal 3:1-2. He is cast, moreover, in the role of the Old Testament fiery reformer, the prophet Elijah, who according to Mal 3:23 is sent before "the great and terrible day of the Lord comes."