

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

**PROCLAIMING
THE
ACCEPTABLE YEAR
OF THE LORD**

WITNESS LEE

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PROCLAIMING THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD

The ministry of the Man-Savior was in His human virtues with His divine attributes. The conception, birth, and growth of the Man-Savior were all in His humanity with His divinity. After undergoing a full preparation, He began to minister. Like His preparation, His ministry was in His humanity with His divinity. In particular, His ministry was not only in His humanity but in His human virtues, and not only with His divinity, but also with His divine attributes. The Man-Savior ministered in His human virtues with His divine attributes.

THE CASE OF A SINFUL WOMAN

As a help in understanding the expression “in His human virtues with His divine attributes,” let us use some cases in the Gospel of Luke as illustrations. In [7:36-50](#) a sinful woman came into the home of a Pharisee who had invited the Lord Jesus to eat with him. As we read the account

of this incident, we see that Jesus, the Man-Savior, conducted Himself in His human virtues. He was not at all bothered by that sinful woman, even when “she began to wet His feet with her tears, and to wipe them with the hair of her head” and when “she kissed His feet affectionately and anointed them with the ointment” (v. 38). If we had been the Lord Jesus, we probably would have been troubled by the behavior of this woman. We might have said to her, “Don’t you know that I am a guest in this house? Can’t you see that I am eating?” However, to act in that way would be to fail to act in the proper human virtues. In this situation the Man-Savior was very kind and patient, realizing that this woman had been convicted of her sins.

He was also merciful. People often speak about love, but rarely about mercy. Mercy, however, is more tender than love. To be merciful is to sympathize with others in their poor condition and low estate.

In addition to exercising kindness, patience, and mercy toward the woman, the Lord Jesus also exercised His understanding. Often we fail to understand others, but the Lord Jesus was very understanding in the case of this woman. Furthermore, He was wise and loving.

Perhaps you are wondering what divine attributes are expressed in [7:36-50](#). First, here we have the divine forgiveness ([7:47-48](#)). God is the only one who can grant forgiveness of sins. He alone is qualified to forgive sins. Therefore, forgiveness is one of the divine attributes.

In [7:50](#) the Lord Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” The giving of peace is also a divine attribute. God is the only one who can give inner peace.

In [7:36-50](#) we see the Man-Savior in the house of a Pharisee acting in His human virtues with His divine attributes. He could behave in such a manner because He was the God-man. We may say that He was a man equipped by God and with God. He possessed all the human virtues created by God, and He also had the divine attributes. Hence, He acted in the highest standard of morality, for His human virtues expressed His divine attributes.

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

The Man-Savior’s human virtues and divine attributes are also revealed in the parable of the good Samaritan ([10:25-37](#)). The good Samaritan signifies the Man-Savior. It is easy to see the

human virtues of the Samaritan, but where in this parable do we see the divine attributes? The Lord's divine attributes are seen in the Samaritan's bringing the wounded one to an inn. "And on the next morning, taking out two denarii, he gave them to the innkeeper and said to him, Take care of him; and whatever you spend in addition, when I return, I will repay you" (10:35). Here we see something of the Lord's divine attributes. Who besides God can do things in such an unexpected, unanticipated way? If this One were not God, how could He have spoken these words to the innkeeper? The Lord's doing the unexpected may be considered an expression of His divine attributes.

THE LORD'S WORD TO THE THIEF

The Lord also acted in His human virtues with His divine attributes when He was on the cross. The thief said to Him, "Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom" (23:42). The Lord replied, "Truly I tell you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise" (v. 43). Here we see the human virtues expressing the divine attributes. In the Lord's word to the thief we see not merely the human virtues, but also the divine

attributes manifested in the Lord's human virtues. Although He was a man, He was filled with all the divine attributes. Therefore, He could act in His human virtues with His divine attributes. These illustrations should help us understand how the Lord ministered in His human virtues with His divine attributes.

PROCLAIMING THE JUBILEE OF GRACE

Luke 4:14 and 15 say, “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee; and news concerning Him went out through all the surrounding country. And He was teaching in their synagogues, being glorified by all.” The Spirit in verse 14 is the Holy Spirit who descended upon the Lord Jesus at the time of His baptism for the accomplishment of His ministry. Therefore, He had the Holy Spirit both essentially for His being and economically for His ministry.

According to verse 15, the Lord was teaching in the synagogues. A synagogue is a meeting place where the Jews read and learn the Holy Scriptures (Acts 13:14-15).

Man's fall into sin broke his fellowship with God, making all men ignorant of the knowledge of God. Such ignorance issued first in darkness

and then in death. The Man-Savior, as the light of the world ([John 8:12; 9:5](#)), came to Galilee, the land of darkness, where people were sitting in the shadow of death, as a great light to shine upon them ([Matt. 4:12-16](#)). His teaching released the word of light to enlighten those in the darkness of death so that they might receive the light of life ([John 1:4](#)). The teaching of the Man-Savior was to bring people out of satanic darkness into the divine light ([Acts 26:18](#)).

The Man-Savior came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. According to His custom, He entered on the Sabbath day into the synagogue and stood up to read. The book, the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, was handed to Him. Then He opened the scroll and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” ([Luke 4:18-19](#)). After the Lord closed the book and gave it back to the attendant, He sat down. Then He said to the people, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your ears” ([v. 21](#)).

Here we see that the Spirit of the Lord was upon the Man-Savior because God had anointed Him to bring good news to the poor. The Greek word rendered “bring good news” is *euaggelizo*, which means to evangelize, to announce good news. To preach the gospel was the first commission of the Savior as God’s anointed One, the Messiah. The good news was to be preached to the poor, that is, to the poor in heavenly, spiritual, and divine things (12:21; Rev. 3:17; see Matt. 5:3).

Luke 4:18 speaks of captives, the blind, and those who are oppressed. The captives are prisoners of war, as exiles and prisoners under Satan’s bondage (Isa. 42:7). The blind include those who are physically and spiritually blind (Zeph. 1:17; John 9:39-41; 1 John 2:11; Rev. 3:17). Recovery of sight is related to release from the power of Satan (Acts 26:18). The Greek word translated “oppressed” comes from a verb meaning to break in pieces (Matt. 12:20). Those who are oppressed are those oppressed under Satan in sickness or in sin (Luke 13:11-13; John 8:34).

In Luke 4:19 we see that the Man-Savior was anointed to “proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” This acceptable year is the New Testament age typified by the year of jubilee (Lev. 25:8-17),

the time when God would accept the returned captives of sin ([Isa. 49:8](#); [2 Cor. 6:2](#)) and when the oppressed under the bondage of sin would enjoy the release of God's salvation.

In [Luke 4:18](#) and [19](#) the Man-Savior proclaims the jubilee of grace. This indicates that He began His ministry by proclaiming the jubilee of grace. The term "the acceptable year of the Lord" denotes the jubilee described in [Leviticus 25](#). According to this chapter, the year of jubilee was a time when slaves were released and property was returned to the rightful owners. Hence, the year of jubilee was a year of release, freedom, and return of lost property. Those who had been sold into slavery were released during the year of jubilee.

The year of jubilee was the fiftieth year, the conclusion of a half century. Thus, according to the book of Leviticus, at the end of every half century there was to be a year called the year of jubilee and also called the acceptable year. The acceptable year signifies the year for the Lord to accept people. In [chapter sixty-one](#) of Isaiah there is a prophecy concerning the fulfillment of this jubilee.

It is not likely that before [Luke 4](#) the Jews understood Isaiah's word concerning the acceptable

year of the Lord. One day the Lord Jesus entered into the synagogue and read from [Isaiah 61](#) regarding the acceptable year of the Lord. The acceptable year is the jubilee of Jehovah.

THE LENGTH OF THE FALLEN HUMAN LIFE

A half century signifies the length of the fallen human life. Fifty years is the length of the entire life of a fallen person. In [Psalm 90:10](#) Moses said that the days of our years are three-score years and ten, and by reason of strength they may be fourscore years. According to Moses, the length of human life is seventy years. If someone is strong, he may live to the age of eighty. According to the Bible, in one sense a person's life may be regarded as beginning at the age of thirty, the age at which a priest began to function. Even the Lord Jesus was thirty years old when He began to minister ([Luke 3:23](#)). Thirty plus fifty equals eighty. Hence, a half century, fifty years, signifies the length of a person's life in the fallen nature. As the fiftieth year, the year of jubilee is the conclusion of our entire fallen life.

What happened to us in our fallen life? We lost our birthright, sold ourselves into captivity,

and became slaves. We lost everything, including our birthright and our status.

A person who has not lost anything would not look forward to the year of jubilee. In fact, to such a one, the jubilee might be a suffering. But the one who has lost everything, including his land and himself, would surely look forward to the year of jubilee. When the year of jubilee came, he would rejoice at being released and recovering the right to his portion of the land.

Every Israelite was allotted a portion of the good land. The good land typifies Christ. Therefore, to lose one's right to the good land is to lose the right to enjoy Christ. Every fallen human being has lost the right to enjoy God as the tree of life and the right to enjoy Christ as the good land. Furthermore, every fallen one has sold himself to sin, the world, and Satan. In [Romans 7:14](#) Paul said of himself, “I am fleshly, sold under sin.” Even Paul had become a slave to sin.

All fallen people have lost their right to enjoy Christ and have sold themselves to negative things. But the year of jubilee indicates that we can be released from bondage and recover the right to enjoy Christ as our portion.

After the Lord Jesus, the Man-Savior, had been tested, He began to minister. At the start of His

ministry He declared the jubilee, the acceptable year of the Lord. This indicates that the entire New Testament age is actually a single year, the year of jubilee, the year for Jehovah to accept the fallen human beings.

THE REAL GOSPEL

The proclamation of the jubilee is the real gospel, the rich and whole gospel. A partial gospel tells people that they are sinners destined for hell, but Jesus loved them and died on the cross for them, and that if they believe in Him they will have eternal life. This is only a part of the jubilee. The jubilee is a proclamation of release from slavery and of the recovery of our spiritual birthright. This jubilee is the acceptable year of the Lord.

According to [chapter four](#) of the Gospel of Luke, the Lord Jesus proclaimed the jubilee on a particular Sabbath day in Galilee. But during the centuries that have followed, the jubilee has been neglected. Therefore, we need a recovery of the New Testament jubilee.

We have been recovered to the enjoyment of the Triune God as the tree of life and of Christ as our land, our portion. The good land is actually more mysterious than the tree of life, for the good

land is the fulfillment of the tree of life. Adam did not eat of the fruit of the tree of life, but the children of Israel partook of the riches of the good land. Today we are enjoying the Triune God as the tree of life, and, even the more, we are enjoying Christ as the good land. Praise the Lord that we have an allotment of this good land! According to [Colossians 1:12](#), this allotment is the portion of the saints. This proves that our birthright, which had been lost, has been recovered in the New Testament jubilee.

In the jubilee we also have been released from bondage. Once we were captives, but we have been released from slavery and brought back to the freedom of the glory of the children of God. This is a further indication that we are in the New Testament jubilee.

According to [Leviticus 25](#), in the year of jubilee everyone was restored to his original condition. Since the New Testament age is the real year of jubilee, this means that God will restore us to our original condition. In Adam we became lost, and we sold ourselves to sin as slaves. But now Jesus, the Man-Savior, has come, and He has brought in the acceptable year of the Lord. This acceptable year of the Lord is, in the New Testament, the fulfillment of the Old Testament

jubilee. In this year we are released, and our lost birthright is recovered, redeemed, and restored.

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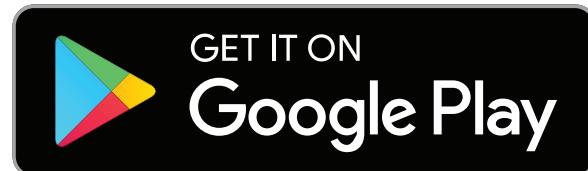
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