

A New Exodus

Luke 9 as a Foreshadowing of the New and Greater Moses

Luke 9:1 And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases,

² and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.

³ And he said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics.

⁴ And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart.

⁵ And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them."

⁶ And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

⁷ Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was happening, and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had been raised from the dead,

⁸ by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the prophets of old had risen.

⁹ Herod said, "John I beheaded, but who is this about whom I hear such things?" And he sought to see him.

¹⁰ On their return the apostles told him all that they had done. And he took them and withdrew apart to a town called Bethsaida.

¹¹ When the crowds learned it, they followed him, and he welcomed them and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing.

¹² Now the day began to wear away, and the twelve came and said to him, "Send the crowd away to go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and get provisions, for we are here in a desolate place."

¹³ But he said to them, "You give them something to eat." They said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish-- unless we are to go and buy food for all these people."

¹⁴ For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each."

¹⁵ And they did so, and had them all sit down.

¹⁶ And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing over them. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.

¹⁷ And they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over was picked up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

¹⁸ Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"

¹⁹ And they answered, "John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah, and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen."

²⁰ Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered, "The Christ of God."

²¹ And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one,

²² saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."

²³ And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

²⁴ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

²⁵ For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?

²⁶ For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

²⁷ But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God."

²⁸ Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

²⁹ And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white.

³⁰ And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah,

³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

³² Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him.

³³ And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"-- not knowing what he said.

³⁴ As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

³⁵ And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!"

³⁶ And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

³⁷ On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him.

³⁸ And behold, a man from the crowd cried out, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child.

³⁹ And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out. It convulses him so that he foams at the mouth, and shatters him, and will hardly leave him.

⁴⁰ And I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not."

⁴¹ Jesus answered, "O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here."

⁴² While he was coming, the demon threw him to the ground and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.

⁴³ And all were astonished at the majesty of God.

But while they were all marveling at everything he was doing, Jesus said to his disciples,

⁴⁴ "Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men."

⁴⁵ But they did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying.

⁴⁶ An argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest.

⁴⁷ But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and put him by his side

⁴⁸ and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. For he who is least among you all is the one who is great."

⁴⁹ John answered, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he does not follow with us."

⁵⁰ But Jesus said to him, "Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you."

(Luke 9:1-50)

OT Stories and the Context of Luke 9:1-50

What good does it do you to know **OT stories**? Is it just so you can win a game of Trivial Pursuit against your friends? A related question, what good does it do you to know that the NT stories about Jesus are deliberately crafted to be fulfillments of those older stories? Suddenly, the first question becomes more interesting. Even more, what if I told you that they do this without damaging or lying about what actually happened in Jesus' real historical life?

I can tell you, it does **a world of good**. The things these stories can teach us about the Lord Jesus are never-ending, but more, they can often be profoundly rich and even life-changing. They can sometimes help us see ourselves more properly even while seeing that Jesus is the one man ever born who can change us and make us as we were commanded to be. And in this, **I'm not saying "with a little**

help.” I’m saying that he does it all. Our passage today demonstrates this in remarkable ways.

Luke 9 takes us to **the end of the second major section** of Luke’s Gospel: Jesus’ Galilean ministry. It will **transition** in **vs. 51** to a great **journey narrative** that will take us to Jerusalem. The majority of that time will only consist of perhaps the last handful of weeks of Jesus’ life, which means that in the few short chapters since ch. 4, we’ve will have seen perhaps as many as three full years go by.¹

Luke 9:1-50 contains **eleven section breaks** in the ESV:

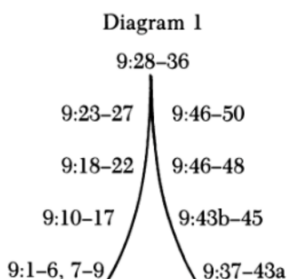
1. Jesus sends Out the Twelve Apostles (9:1-6)
2. Herod is Perplexed by Jesus (7-9)
3. Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand (10-17)
4. Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ (18-20)
5. Jesus Foretells His Death (21-22)
6. Take Up Your Cross and Follow Jesus (23-27)
7. The Transfiguration (28-36)
8. Jesus Heals a Boy with an Unclean Spirit (37-43)
9. Jesus Again Foretells His Death (43b-45)
10. Who is the Greatest? (46-48)
11. Anyone Not Against Us Is For Us (49-50)

¹ Judd Burton has recently dated the Transfiguration to the time of the Roman Lupercalia, held Feb 15 of each year, since Jesus is up at Caesarea Philippi and considered sacred time important to his ministerial warfare efforts against the evil powers to be quite important. This is a thought most have not considered, and would put the events even later than you usually find in Bible timelines, meaning there are less than two months left by the time we get to around vs. 18.

This is the most by far that we've seen in one chapter, and there are two more before the it ends. This can easily give you a sense that the [material here is all rather random](#) or unrelated. This is all the more true if we preach them all separately over the course of nearly three months.

But scholars have seen this all as [a single unit of thought](#),² which means that these various story-pieces are actually somehow related to one another. How might that be and does it have anything to do with my opening questions? To answer, we are going to spend today thinking about [Moses and the Exodus](#), something that will not only pay dividends today, but in the weeks to come, as it seems very much that these verses are a foreshadowing to something that Luke is

³ For example, [David P. Moessner](#), "[Luke 9:1-50: Luke's Preview of the Journey of the Prophet Like Moses of Deuteronomy](#)," *JBL* 102.4 (Dec 1983): 575-604; [Robert F. O'Toole](#), "[Luke's Message in Luke 9:1-50](#)," *CBQ* 49.1 (Jan 1987): 74-89. This is not unanimous. For example, [Bock](#) breaks it down as 9:1-17 and 20-50, while [Nolland](#) sees 8:1-9:20 and 9:21-50 as the breaks. But for my purposes, I'm sticking with this one long unit.



Moessner has the units working together like this (see the diagram left). Notice that he has it looking like a chiasm, but flipped so that it looks [like a mountain](#) rather than the traditional sideways arrow. This is deliberate, because the center of the structure takes place on *a mountain*. But notice how the right side is actually an ABCDEABCD pattern, as opposed to the classic: ABCDEDCBA. We will look at this structure as we go along.

going to do through the entire third act of his Gospel—the journey to Jerusalem.³

The Exodus

Its Geography

To begin, I want us to think about the **geography of the Exodus** as it comes to us in Genesis-Deuteronomy. The Book of Genesis acts as a prologue to the Exodus. At the end of this book, we arrive in Egypt through Joseph and the series of sovereignly orchestrated events that led him there.

Once in **Egypt**, we spend the first fifteen chapters of the book of Exodus there, until it's time to leave. The Pharaoh has been a ruthless dictator and God calls Moses to lead the people out of Egypt. After departing the Red Sea, they go into the **wilderness**, where Israel will now find themselves until **18:26** when they come to the foot of Mt. Sinai. They will then stay at **Mt. Sinai** through the rest of Exodus, through

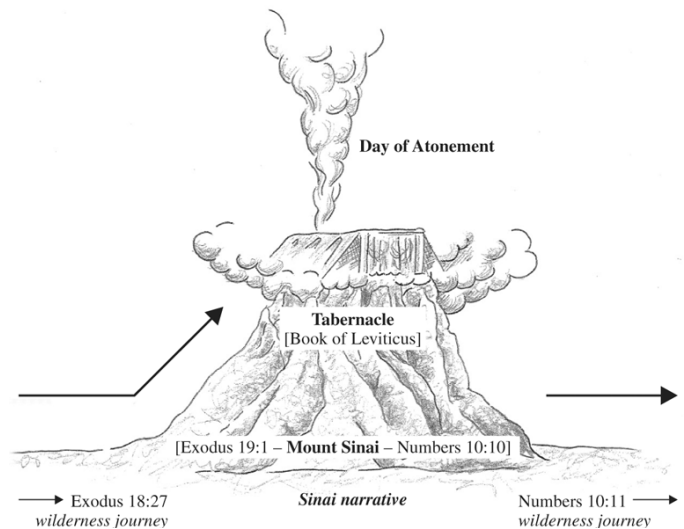
³ Following Moessner (602), this takes place in four ideas found together in Deuteronomy: “(1) like their ancestors, this generation is a faithless and rebellious generation (Luke 11:14–54; 12:54–13:9; 17:20–37); (2) God sent his prophet to reveal his will and to call his people to repent (10:1–16; 11:14–54; 12:54–13:9; 13:22–35; 14:15–24; 15; 17:22–37; 19:1–27); (3) but Israel rejects his prophets (9:52–58; 10:25–37; 11:37–54; 12:35–53; 13:22–35); and (4) as a result, Israel will be judged (11:31–32, 50–51; 12:57–59; 13:24–30, 35; 14:24; 17:26–30; 19:27, 41–44).” David W. Pao and Eckhard J. Schnabel, “Luke,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, UK: Baker Academic; Apollos, 2007), 314.

all of Leviticus, and all the way through **Numbers 10:10**, where they will leave once again into the *wilderness*. They will be in the wilderness all the way until **21:35** where they will come within sight of the *Jordan River*, where they will be, essentially, until the book of Joshua.

The entire center section of this—the book of Leviticus—is where God gives Israel the Levitical Covenant centered at the tabernacle, God’s sanctuary on earth, the human counterpart of Mt. Sinai which they remain **at the foot** of during those days. Viewed all together, this in turn centers upon **the Day of Atonement** law (Lev 16) and **the moral law (19)** which are complimentary to God giving Moses the law at the top of Mt. Sinai.

**Day of Atonement
as Center of Pentateuch
(Two Complementary Pictures)**

- Exodus A. In Egypt (1:1-15:21)
 - B. In the Wilderness (15:22-18:26)
 - C. At Mount Sinai (19-40)
- Leviticus D. Leviticus as Covenant → **Day of Atonement (Lev 16)**
- Numbers C¹. At Mount Sinai (1:1-10:10)
 - B¹. In the Wilderness (10:11-21:35)
 - A¹. In Transjordan (22-36)



We can therefore view this entire story through *geography*: in their old home, into the *wilderness*, at the foot of Mt. Sinai, back into the *wilderness*, and preparing to enter their new home. The mountain is central.

Its Events

Next, we can think more specifically about some of the *memorable events* that take place during these years. Think, for example, about how *twelve tribes* went down to Egypt and only together do they make up the old covenant, old *kingdom* people of God. Together, after many great and *mighty miracles* performed by God's *servants Moses and Aaron*, including miracles that defeated the *demonic* magicians Jannes and Jambres and the many miracles that created *diseases* in the Egyptian people and produce, they would be told to ready themselves for travel where God would deliver them with a mighty hand.

As God continued to perform miracles on their behalf. Plagues of frogs and gnats, darkness, and the firstborn. The Red Sea opened and swallowed the most powerful army on earth. News soon spread the surrounding peoples. *Who is this Moses?* Who are these Israelites? And can we stand before them? Dismay and trembling seized them.

At this point, Moses led the children of Israel into the wilderness, the desert, a desolate place. He numbered off the men as if for battle and set them over companies of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens so that they might better delegate and lead the people. The masses grew hungry. The twelve tribes began to tell Moses, send them back to the cities of Egypt where they can eat and have their houses back. But God through Moses had other plans in this wilderness. He would give them manna to eat, the bread of angels, the bread of heaven.

Soon, they would arrive at Mt. Sinai, the mountain of God. Upon doing so, the people were wondering what was going to happen. The elders of the twelve tribes received their orders, and God came to them on the mountain, giving them his law and commands on the eighth day.⁴ Soon thereafter, he would show himself in a special way to the elders and priests, forcing them to be confronted with the One in whose presence they now sat and ate. They would see a divine theophany, God in his glory, a cloud enveloping them, a similar vision that Moses would see, alone, on the top of Sinai.

After Moses descends the mountain, he has an encounter with the elders and priests that shakes him to the core. While

⁴ For the eighth day here see James Jordan, "The Chronology of the Pentateuch (Part 6)," *Biblical Chronology Newsletter* 6.8 (Aug 1994), http://www.biblicalhorizons.com/biblical-chronology/6_08/.

he was away, the people began to commit **gross idolatry** and the leaders not only didn't stop it, they participated in it. It was as if the people had become **possessed** by some force, driving them to pagan worship while the Presence of the living God dwelt above them on the mountain.

Moses, who had come down the mountain with the tablets of the covenant written by the very Finger of God, throws them down, **shattering** them on the ground at the foot of the mountain. He cries out to the **perverse** generation that they have no faith in God. They are stiff-necked, slow of hearing, never understanding.

Their faithlessness increases during their time back in the wilderness. They grow thirsty, God gives them water from a rock. They grow hungry. God gives them meat that comes out their nostrils. They grow thirsty and Moses strikes the rock. For it, he is not allowed to enter the Promised Land. He must **suffer and die outside**, only seeing the promises from afar.

Its Leader

Finally, we need to think about something very specific about who Moses is. The **very end of the book of Deuteronomy** ends with a redaction, that is an addition by some scribe sometime after Moses died. My guess is that it was probably

somewhere around the time of Ezra, when the forms of many of our OT books as we have them today were being finalized. This is because of what it tells us about Moses. It reads, “*And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, none like him for all the signs and the wonders that the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, and for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all Israel*” (Deut 34:10-12). If this was written long before prophets like Isaiah or Elijah or Elisha had come along, it would be rather meaningless. But if it is a reflection near the end of the time that God sent prophets in the OT, it would be **deeply meaningful**.

The Greater Prophet

To get into our stories, I want to go in **reverse order** of what we have just thought about. The prophet is freshest on our minds. Earlier in Deuteronomy 18, there was a long section of prophecy that dealt with **a future coming prophet**. It says, “*The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers-- it is to him*

you shall listen--just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' And the LORD said to me, 'They are right in what they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.'" (Deut 18:15-19).

In Luke's two-volumes, in *two of the first sermons in church history*, this passage is quoted by Peter. First in Acts 3:22, "Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall *listen to him* in whatever he tells you,'" then in Acts 7:37, "This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.'" Clearly, Peter thought this should be a cornerstone of the earliest Apostolic preaching. But why?

It is because *he heard these very words* come out of the Father's mouth at the transfiguration. The transfiguration is in our passage today, though it is fairly far down—*being the seventh of our stories*. This is what it says, "And a voice

came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is my Son, my Chosen One; *listen to him!*’ (Luke 9:35). In these words, the Father is declaring to Peter, James, and John that Jesus is the prophet who was predicted by Moses. Importantly though, Moses himself is there, the one who told us about this coming prophet, as is Elijah, making the two greatest prophets of the OT and the personification of the Law and the Prophets. They serve for our purposes right now as two witnesses that testify to the truth of the declaration.

Of course, being just a prophet is one thing. But there’s more on the line here than just being a prophet. But we are not yet prepared to see that. So let us turn our thoughts first to the storyline of the Exodus and then to the geography as we try to wrap our heads around what Jesus is up to in this chapter.

The Greater Exodus

A second and very important part of the transfiguration story that relates to Moses has to do with the conversation that Jesus is having with Moses and Elijah. Luke is the only one of the Gospel writers that tell us this. It says that they “spoke of his departure” (Luke 9:31). “Departure” is a very

unfortunate translation, because while it is certainly a true enough idea, it does not permit you to see what the word is actually signifying in Greek. Ironically, the word in Greek is literally translated only by the CJB (the Complete Jewish Bible) and a couple of idiomatic translations (MIT and Living Bible). The Greek word is *exodos*—**exodus**. They spoke of Jesus' **exodus**! Jesus talking to Moses about an exodus! That has a totally different meaning in our ears, as it should. How ironic that idiomatic translations which are supposed to be the least literal and a Jewish translation end up being the only ones to get it.

What is this Exodus? It is spoken about in **the fourth story of Peter confessing Jesus as the Messiah** and again in **the ninth story of Jesus foretelling his death**. “**The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised**” (**Luke 9:22**). “**Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men**” (**44**). Jesus' exodus is **his departure from the world of men**, to the place of the dead, and then to everlasting glory. It will happen in Jerusalem after **a long journey** down to the Holy City from Galilee. Jesus' journey, the third long section of Luke's Gospel, is Jesus' exodus event.

But if Luke deliberately chooses to use the exodus to convey what Jesus is about to do, and if as we have already seen there are already tie-ins in a couple of ways to Moses, then perhaps we should be **looking for more Mosaic imagery** throughout the chapter? This is where things become very interesting.

The Sending of the Twelve and the Miracles of Moses and Aaron (Luke 9:1-6)

In **the first story** of our passage, Jesus **sends out the twelve apostles**. It says that he **called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases (9:1)**. The number **twelve** is again mentioned (see the three times in the previous chapter). But now, Jesus is transferring his immense power to them. They, in effect, get to start acting in his stead. His power is transferred to the twelve.

He sends them out to **proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal (2)**. Twelve and a kingdom parallels what God is about to make out of the nation of Israel. He tells them to **take nothing: no staff, bag, bread, money, and only a single tunic (3)**. They are to **stay at whatever house receives them**

and **shake the dust off their feet** from anyone who will not as a testimony against them (4-5). So, the twelve go out through villages, **preaching and healing everywhere** (6). In all probability, this takes many months. We are going to see a sudden telescoping of Jesus' ministry in this chapter which zooms in on that last few weeks of his life, which will begin around **vs. 18**.

In this story, we have a few **parallels**. First, it takes us to the beginning of the Exodus story, where we see the **twelve tribes** poised to leave Egypt and enter the Promised Land as God's representatives on the earth under the old covenant and old **kingdom**. This will take place only after God gives **great power to Moses and Aaron**, his disciples if you will, **to perform miracles** among the Egyptians and Jews, some great, some terrible, all powerful. At one point, they will be confronted with the magicians of Egypt, called Jannes and Jambres by Paul, magicians who perform **demonic actions** with staffs and serpents and by the power of witchcraft are able to emulate the first couple of miracles of Moses. But Moses' power is greater than the sorcerers, and his staff is able to swallow up the demonic serpents. After this, there will be terrible plagues that strike Egypt, even while God's

people are kept safe, free from harm. **Healing** will come, even to Egypt in the intervening times.

But God hardens the Pharaoh's heart, because the exodus must happen God's way. There is more power to be displayed before the nations. They leave Egypt with a mighty hand when the firstborn are killed. The Israelites are told to eat the Passover in haste, with **belt's fastened, sandals on feet, and staff in hand** (**Ex 12:11**). For tomorrow, they will be set free. As they leave, they are pursued to the Red Sea, where the greatest of all miracles takes place. **Moses** raises his staff, the sea is opened, the people walk across on dry land, but Pharaoh and his army are drown and destroyed.

Herod Perplexed and the Terror Wonder of the Nations (Luke 9:7-9)

This has **an effect on the peoples** around them. “**Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them; because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone, till your people, O LORD, pass by, till the people pass by whom you have purchased**” (**Ex 15:15-16**).

This finds a parallel in our [second short story](#), which seems like it doesn't belong here. We learn that [Herod the tetrarch](#) heard about all that was happening, and he was “[perplexed](#).” Herod, of course, is the grandson of an [Edomite](#), Antipater the Idumaeen. The word “[perplexed](#)” (*diaporeō*) is unique to Luke. It means he is [bewildered](#), without the means to deal with the information. Curiously, the word used for the Edomites is not translated into the LXX, so we can't have a parallel. I think Luke chooses this word because it is a perfect Greek word to use for [בהל](#), which means troubled or dismayed. Herod represents the nations' reactions to the power of God in the Exodus through Moses and Aaron.

His bewilderment comes from what the people were saying. Some said that [John](#) had been raised from the dead ([Luke 9:7](#)), others that [Elijah](#) had appeared, or one of the [prophets](#) had risen from the dead ([8](#)). Herod had beheaded John ([9](#)), and he wondered about Jesus, and sought an audience with him, most likely for very bad reasons.

Jesus Feeds 5,000 (Luke 9:10-17)

After their time away, [the apostles returned](#) and told Jesus all that they had done. He took them and went to a town

called **Bethsaida**, meaning house of hunting or house of fishing or house of provision (10).⁵ It is the hometown of Peter, Andrew, and Philip (**John 1:44**), and perhaps also John and James. It is north of the Sea a couple of miles, just east and up a ravine from the Jordan, the southern entrance to the Hula Valley. We discover that crowds learned where he had gone and followed him, and he welcomed them and told them about the **kingdom** of God and he **healed** many (11). The place is described, yet again, as “**desolate**” (*erēmos*; 12), that word that is perhaps related to Hermon, located at the north end of the large valley. It is a **wilderness**, indeed, the same wilderness Jesus was tempted by the devil in. This all has parallels with **Israel being led into the wilderness**, at various stages, where God for example heals the bitter water, showing his provision.

But there was also a **place of testing**. And the disciples of Jesus tell him to send the crowd away to the surrounding villages to find lodging and get provisions. It reminds me of the **complaining of the twelve tribes** of why Moses had

⁵ There are a couple of strange convergences here, that I'll relegate to a footnote. First, we've just seen Herod. Herod is clearly an Edomite. The Edomites had a long history of either breeding with Nephilim or being used by them (it should be remembered, however, that they actually destroyed the Nephilim, as a nation, in Deuteronomy 2). The reason this might be relevant is because of the context of casting out demons in the first story. Several have seen Herod's demonic behavior as, at the very least, mimicking that of the nephilim (see Sanger, Graham, Melber). Putting Herod here thus reinforces the demonic imagery. Second, Esau was a hunter. How interesting to take the disciples now to the town of the hunter.

brought them into the wilderness to die of hunger. They had it so good back in Egypt with houses and leeks and melons!

Jesus suddenly tells them to **give the people something to eat** (13). How could he do such a thing? They didn't have anywhere near enough food. But think about the power he had just given them. Yet, even though they've just come back from doing such great miracles, as early as this very story, *Jesus* is the one **doing the teaching and healing again**, not them. They were slow of hearing and understanding. They said they had no more than five loaves and two fish (13) ($5 + 2 = 7$), and then they **numbered just the men**, about 5,000 (14). Nowhere near enough food. **Moses often numbered the men of Israel**, usually for war, but also so that he might set leaders over them to delegate better when there was need. Jesus tells his disciples to go and have the people sit down in **companies of about fifty each** (14). Moses would appoint leaders who were to set the people into groups of *thousands*, hundreds, *fifties*, and tens in that story with Jethro (**Ex 18:21, 25**).

As the elders obeyed Moses, so the disciples obeyed Jesus and all were sitting down (15). Then Jesus took the loaves and fish, looked up **to heaven**, said a blessing, broke the loaves, and gave it to the disciples to set before the crowd

(16). And incredibly, everyone ate and was satisfied. Curiously, they had **twelve baskets** of broken pieces left over.

Twelve. It reminds us again of the **twelve tribes**. These were the tribes who grumbled about being hungry and God rained on them manna from heaven (**Ex 16**). They were all able to gather whatever they needed or wanted, so long as it was not on the Sabbath. And everyone ate to their hearts content. Curiously, Luke's story has a parallel in John, one of the few stories told by all four Gospel writers (**John 6:10ff**). In that telling, Jesus calls himself the **Bread or Manna** of heaven as he compares himself to this very miracle of manna in the wilderness (**John 6:31ff**). In other words, this feeding of the 5,000 is a deliberate recasting of the Manna miracle of the Exodus.

Peter Confesses Jesus as Messiah and Jesus foretells his Death (Luke 9:18-20, 21-22)

Curiously, as we enter the fourth story, **Luke skips over about two chapters** found in both Matthew and Mark. Stories about Jesus as a political Messiah (**Matt 14:22-23**), Peter walking on water (which is even found in John; **14:24-33**),

his going over to Gennesaret (14:34-36), the Pharisees reproaching Jesus (15:1-20), Jesus' withdrawal to Tyre and Sidon (21-28), and then through Phoenicia and east towards Hermon and south into Decapolis (29-38), more confrontations with the Pharisees and Sadducees (39-16:4), another visit to Bethsaida (5-12), **these are all missing in Luke's account.**⁶ Why? I suggest it is precisely because they are not needed in establishing Jesus' identity, since he knows that Matthew, Mark, and other proto-gospels are already out there circulating these stories, and second, specifically because **they do little to further his exodus typology.** They simply are ancillary to that purpose (he already knows that his Gospel is going to be longer than the others anyway).

So Luke breezes all the way through these until at last, Jesus **returns again to Caesarea Philippi (Baniyas,** with the cave of Pan), at the foot of Mt. Hermon, which we only know about because of the other Gospels, as Luke does not even worry about telling us *this* information. But **we know it is this story,** because this is the place where **Peter makes his great confession.** So, a long time after the previous story, perhaps even many more months, and we find Jesus praying alone with his disciples when he asks them a question. *Who*

⁶ A great place to see this is Archibald Thomas Robertson, *A Harmony of the Gospels for Students of the Life of Christ* (Harper & Brothers, 1922), § 75-91.

do the crowds say that I am (Luke 9:18)? This returns us to the thought with Herod.

Jesus asks this in order to *elicit the correct response*. The disciples at first just parrot the crowds, “*John the Baptist. Elijah. One of the prophets*” (19). *But who do you say that I am?* Peter speaks up, “*The Christ of God.*” The *Messiah*. That’s all we get of this fascinating story, save that he strictly charged them to tell this to no one and then gives his reason. “*The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised,*” words that make up the ESV’s *fifth separate section break* of the chapter. This reason is not just thrown here for no reason. The *parallels are clearly to the person of Moses*, who will be continually tormented by the leaders of Israel, suffering at their hands, and even at his own hand, as he *ends up dying outside of the land of Israel*. Jesus is likening himself, in the typology, to Moses.

Take Up Your Cross and Follow Jesus (Luke 9:23-28⁷)

In the particular part of Moses story that scholars have identified as being parallel here, we find ourselves at *the foot*

⁷ The ESV breaks it at vs. 27. I’ll break it at vs. 28 only for preaching purposes.

of Mt. Sinai, but no one has yet gone up it. On the eighth day from arriving at the mountain, God came to the people and gave them the Ten Commandments, and then, presumably, a couple chapters worth of instructions that follow. The people then immediately entered into covenant with God (Ex 24:7).

Jesus, likewise, is at the foot of Mt. Hermon, but only still there.⁸ Similarly, Jesus now gives some instructions to his disciples. They are instructions about the kingdom of God. Meaning that he's the king. Meaning that these are covenantal stipulations. They are almost proverbial in nature. The first tells us the difficulty of following Jesus. "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23). The next gives a paradox of losing to save. "Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it" (24). The next reinforces it. "For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?" (25). I find it fascinating that in the parallel section of Exodus, the stories are about losing babies in the womb or losing oxen in the field and then having to pay damages. And this is all sandwiching the *Lex Talionis*—an eye for an eye.

⁸ For the eighth day timeline here see James Jordan, "The Chronology of the Pentateuch (Part 6)," *Biblical Chronology Newsletter* 6.8 (Aug 1994), http://www.biblicalhorizons.com/biblical-chronology/6_08/.

Losing your eye. But Jesus has in mind much greater things that even those. **Losing your own eternal soul for eternity.**

The final statements introduce the theme of **glory**, something Israel is seeing on top of the mountain at the very moment. “**Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the angels. But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God**” (26-27). These act as a **transition** to the seventh story, the **transfiguration**, where the glory comes to the forefront, literally, as **vs. 28** says, “**about eight days after these sayings.**”

The Transfiguration: Part I—The Glory (Luke 9:29-31)

Right after the covenant, the **70 elders, Moses, Aaron, and his sons**, went up the mountain, ate with God, and **saw his glory**. These are the leaders of Israel and her priests. As someone points out, “**at various points in the gospels and Acts, we see Peter being typologically presented as a high priest figure. Peter is as Aaron and James and John are related**

to Nadab and Abihu).”⁹ It is at this moment, then, that our seventh story begins. Jesus “took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray” (Luke 9:28).

“And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white” (29).¹⁰ This is the glory of Christ. He is being transfigured. Glory is brought up explicitly next, “And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in *glory* and spoke of his [exodus], which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem” (30-31). Now, this isn’t the glory of the kingdom that Jesus had just talked about. Rather, it is the glory of God himself. The parallel is found in Exodus 24, “Then he said to Moses, ‘Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness ... they beheld God” (Ex 24:1, 9-11). Do you see what

⁹ Alistair Roberts, “Exodus Themes in Luke 9:10-50,” *Alastair’s Adversaria* (Nov 28, 2013), <https://alastairadversaria.com/2013/11/28/exodus-themes-in-luke-910-50/>. I’ve taken many of the ideas throughout these sections from this fascinating blog entry.

¹⁰ The transfiguration story is chiasmic. See Steve Jeffery, “A Chiasm in Luke 9,” *Emmanuel North London Church* (Aug 29, 2012), <https://www.northlondonchurch.org/ministers-blog/post/a-chiasm-in-luke-9/>.

understanding the OT story with the NT parallel does? **It proves to you that Jesus is God**, that Jesus is in fact the God that these men beheld with their eyes.

The Transfiguration: Part II—Awaking from Sleep (Luke 9:32-36)

The **high point of the mountain-transfiguration** story is **vs. 32**. But it doesn't begin well. “**Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with *sleep*, but when they became fully *awake* they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him**” (32). Asleep. Awake. That's the transition. But do you remember who was asleep in ch. 8? It was Jesus. Jesus slept during the story. But now, the disciples **sleep** during the transfiguration! This is not good.

Thankfully, they became fully **awake**. The verbal form here (aorist active participle) is not that they woke themselves up, but that they became awake. It appears that God woke them. And they saw his glory and the two men.

We then read, “**And as the men were *parting* from him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make **three tents**, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah’-- not knowing what he said**” (33). Not knowing indeed. The word “tent” is the word for the tabernacle. The

plans for the tabernacle were given to Moses on Mt. Sinai! Yet, he wants to erect **temporary huts** for the glory of heaven!

“As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud” (34). More fear from the disciples. The cloud is the same thing that happened to Moses, immediately after he left the seventy and went up the mountain by himself (Ex 24:15). And thus, our focus is taken off of Peter and put squarely onto Jesus, the Greater Moses. “And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!’” (35). **Listen to him!** The Prophet to come. “And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen” (36).

Jesus Heals a Boy with an Unclean Spirit (Luke 9:37-43)

After seeing such a thing, something that we could not exhaust the meaning of if we had a thousand sermons, **what do you suppose would happen to the disciples**, especially Peter and especially after he has made such a great confession of faith? If you are fond of embellishing the heroes, turning

them into sinless ideals, you will be very surprised. If you know your story of Israel, you won't be.

They come down the mountain the next day and a great crowd meets them (**Luke 9:37**). If you've been following along, **you've heard this story before**. Moses, after being alone with God comes down Mt. Sinai and beholds the people at the base.

A man cries out, **“Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child”** (**38**). What's wrong with him? An **evil spirit** has been **seizing him, convulsing him**, making him foam at the mouth. In fact, Luke says that it **“shatters [*suntribō*] him”** (**39**), the only time Luke uses this word anywhere. We read of Moses, **“As soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets out of his hands and *broke* [LXX: *suntribō*] them at the foot of the mountain”** (**Ex 32:19**). Gross idolatry had overtaken the people and Aaron and the Elders! They had become possessed by some force that caused them to listen to the people and commit great sin against God.

Suddenly, the as our story continues, we are not as surprised to discover that the man had **begged the disciples to cast it out**, but they couldn't (**Luke 9:40**). Jesus responds, **“O**

faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you and bear with you?” (41). Exodus, “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws?” (Ex 16:28). Deuteronomy, “They are a perverse generation, children in whom is no faithfulness” (Deut 32:20). Moses had even been quarreling with God on Mt. Sinai about this very point just before coming down the mountain where he met his faithless brother. They are a stiff-necked people (Ex 32:9; 33:3, 5; 34:9). God has had enough.

But **Moses intercedes** and God relents, even though it is the truth. Jesus tells the man to bring his son. And while he was coming, the demon threw him to the ground and convulsed him, but **Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit** and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father (42). And everyone was astonished at the majesty of God (43).

Jesus Again Foretells his Death (Luke 9:43b-45)

But **they didn't understand** that they were at this very moment being **Israel at the foot of Mt. Sinai**. They didn't understand the mercy of God in Christ. Things just descend to remind us of the rest of the long Exodus narrative. Jesus first tells his disciples at the very moment that everyone is

marveling at the miracle, “Let these words sink into your ears” (44), and he tells them again, about his own exodus to death at the hands of men. “But they did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it” (45), reminding us of the Parable of the Sower. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying. They were afraid to talk to him about what they’d seen on the mountain. They were unable to cast out the demon because of their lack of faith. Are you getting the picture yet?

Who is the Greatest (Luke 9:46-48)

Then, an argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest (46). Korah and his rebellious rabble, the very cousins of Moses. In that story, Moses told them that the LORD would show who is his, and who is holy (Num 16:5). The Lord had already brought the Levites near to himself (9), but it wasn’t enough. Moses commanded censers to be lit with incense (7, 17) and taken to the side (LXX: 18, 19, 27) of the tent of meeting. Similarly, Jesus takes a young child and puts him by his side (Luke 9:47). “Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. For he who is least among you all is

the one who is great” (48). Will you believe in the one God has chosen? Will you accept the censor at his side?

Anyone Not Against Us is For Us (Luke 9:49-50)

Similarly, the **eleventh and final story** sees the disciples now telling Jesus that others are casting out demons in his name. They tried to stop him, because he isn't in their little click (49). But Jesus said to him, ‘Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you’ (50). And our stories end abruptly. Why?

The Greater Glory: Wilderness-Mountain-Wilderness

Let's now think about **the movement of our story, the geography**, and how it lines up with the Exodus. The Exodus went from Egypt to the wilderness to Mt. Sinai, back into the wilderness, and finally to the Transjordan, where Moses would not be able to enter, but would die outside the land.

Similarly, we find Jesus hanging around the **Gentiles of the north**, going into the **wilderness** again (**Luke 9:12**), tak-

ing his disciples to the foot of a **mountain (18)**, then a handful to its **top (28)**, **descending (37)**, and then telling them that he must be delivered after a **long journey** into the hands of men to die (44; cf. **22** and **31**). The **mountain is the high point, literarily and literally** of Luke 9. From there, they descend into the chaos of souls still in desperate need of a Savior who can actually do something more than even being in their presence. **They are failing their tests at every turn.** The problems that have always plagued Israel still persist. It isn't what we expect of Jesus' great disciples! Truly, it is difficult to follow Jesus. Perhaps, we might say, it is impossible. Just having Jesus here on the earth is not enough. He has a mission, an exodus to undergo, and if he does not do it, even the best of us are lost forever. Those are the stakes.

This entire typology here in Luke 9 is here to **teach you something**. It is a lesson you will rarely hear taught when each story is taken in isolation from the rest. You, like the twelve and the people, are **just like Israel**. We all are. You are in desperate need of a Greater Moses, who leads a greater Exodus through a greater death, one that would free people not just from slavery to Egypt, but guarantee entrance into

eternal life in his new kingdom, starting in his church.¹¹ One that would not merely cause them to say that Jesus is the Messiah, but that Jesus is God in human flesh. One that would not look at how you are greater than your brother, but how you are in more need than your brother of salvation from the sin that so entangles.

In this, we are being prepared for how Jesus, ever long-suffering and patient, always bearing with our foolishness and blindness, will do until we make our way to the end of Luke's Gospel, but in our time now has done all that we need to be transformed by the sheer work and mercy and grace of God. **Their failures teach you that more is needed.** You do not have it in yourself to save or sanctify yourself. But thank God, it has been done! It is finished. And today, the living word of God is powerful for all. See yourself in the story. And see how God has provided the perfect Prophet, through the perfect Exodus, to the perfect Journey to death on a cross for your sins, and resurrected life for your justification. Then you will know the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

¹¹ A great short article touching on this is **Nicholas T. Batzig**, "The Exodus Motif in Luke-Acts," *Feeding On Christ* (Oct 1, 2010), <https://feedingonchrist.org/the-exodus-motiff-in-luke-acts/>.

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