



Quaker Universalist Voice

Luke 4–5: Special Words in the Galilean Ministry

by J.M. Spears

Acceptance (Take care of) (Luke 4:40, 5:15) comes from the root idea of service, attendance, ministry, healing, or curing. Many modern scholars believe that the primary “complaint” of being an outcast was to be without power. The need was to be accepted. Jesus’ acceptance of the outcasts was seen as a threat to those with social power. The healing stories show Jesus’ activity in providing help for the problems resulting from sickness and lack of acceptance. Illness was associated with impurity or sin, for which God gave punishment. To be known as a sinner meant exclusion from full status in society. The idea of outcasts comes from a word meaning “being without strength, weak, inform, helpless, afflicted, distressed, or oppressed.”

Earthling (Luke 5:20) comes from the same root as “anthropology,” related to human beings. In Hebrew *adamah* is the soil from which our food comes. In this translation of Genesis, *adam*, which is from *adamah*, is translated as “earthling.”

Example (Luke 5:36) comes from the root meaning to place one thing by the side of another, a comparing, a parallel case cited in illustration or simile. A fiction is employed to represent that which is real. The word “parable” is a transliteration. Here, the story seems to give three examples to show that the new order cannot be put within the old order, and that the Pharisees would not even try the new, because they were satisfied with the old.

Fast (Luke 5:33, 34, 35) is to voluntarily not eat for a religious reason, such as, to become humble before God, to prepare to learn and act in God’s way, or to receive a revelation of the Spirit.

Lake Gennesaret (Luke 5:1). is also known as the Sea of Galilee, or Lake Tiberias.

Ones who keep God’s laws (Luke 5:32) comes from the root word meaning right, justice, just equitable, fair, or righteous.

Meeting place (Luke 4:38, 44) is the synagogue, which is the transliteration of a word that comes from the idea of bringing together, collecting and gathering. The group of people that gather is translated as the “meeting.” The building or location of the gathering is translated as the “meeting place”

Religious Separatist (Luke 5:17, 21, 20, 33) comes from the word *Pharisee* that is a transliteration of the root idea of separation or sectarian. The word *Phares* means “one who is set apart.” The Pharisees separated themselves from other groups in society.

Restore (Luke 5:17) is to bring back from a state of sin and condemnation to a state of wholeness.

Separated, Separations (Luke 5:8, 20, 23, 32) comes from the idea of missing the mark or goal. The goal is a relationship with, and a trust of, God. Many translate the Greek word as “sin.” One concept of sin in the Bible is being separated from God. To be separated from one’s self, other people, or God’s creation is part of being separated from God.

Sores (Luke 5:12, 13) comes from the idea of peeling or striping off scaly or scabby skin. In the first century, many skin diseases were identified as leprosy (See Acceptance above) to understand the full significance of having the stigma that accompanies a person with a skin disease.

Student Followers (Luke 5:30) comes from the root word meaning “to learn,” “to be taught,” “to learn by practice or experience,” “to acquire a custom or habit,” or “to understand and comprehend.” The Greek word is often translated as “disciple.”

Take care of (See Acceptance above).

Teachers of religious law (Luke 5:17, 21, 30) comes from a compound word made up of the Greek words for law and teacher. Often the Greek word is translated as “scribes.”

Warned (Luke 4:39, 41) is to set a penalty, possible blame, or punishment. It is to threaten, reprimand, enjoin, or rebuke.