



Quaker Universalist Voice

Luke 23–24: Jesus' Death Translation Notes

by J.M. Spears

Special Word in Luke 23

- **Barabbas** (Luke 23:18, 25) is a Hebrew name meaning “son of the father.”
- **Caesar** (Luke 23:2) is the family name of the first Roman emperor or ruler.
- **Crucify** (Luke 23:33) is the act of putting to death by nailing or binding the person to a cross or, sometimes, to a tree. This capital punishment and involves public shame and torture.
- **Inner Temple** (Luke 23:45) is a special holy place inside the temple building where only the priests could go to say prayers and make offerings to God.
- **Leader** (Luke 23:42) is a translation of the Greek word *kyrios*. Luke’s story about Jesus is written in the Greek language. Many people who translate Luke’s story into English use the English word “lord” or “sir” for the Greek word *kyrios*. The Hebrew people believed that Yahweh (God) is too great, too big, too important to ever speak or write the name “Yahweh”. They use many words other than the name to talk about their God. Adonai is one of the Hebrew words used instead of Yahweh. *Adonai* is translated from Hebrew into the Greek word *Kyrios*. In Luke’s story about Jesus, the Greek word *kyrios* is used, sometimes to refer to Yahweh (God) and sometime to refer to Jesus, or the Christ. The translator decides which word to use in English. In this translation, when *kyrios* refers to Jesus or the Christ, it is translated as “Leader”. When the word refers to God, it is translated as “Yahweh.”
- **Sabbath** (Luke 23:54) is the day set aside for rest and worship. The noun comes from the verb meaning to stop, to be at the end. It was the seventh day of the week. Sabbath started at dusk and lasted for 24 hours until the next dusk.

Special Words in Luke 24:

- **Apostle** (Luke 24:11, 13) is one who is sent out as an envoy, or as a commissioned messenger especially as God’s messenger. *Apostles* are often seen as a group of highly honored believers who have a special function. Judaism had an office known as *apostle*. In the early church, the word *apostle* was used to designate those with missionary responsibilities. Basic to Jesus is his self-understanding of having been sent by God. In turn, Jesus “sent out” disciples, with authority, to continue to extend God’s mission.
- **Christ**: (Luke 24:26, 27, 46) is a title that means the “anointed one” in the Greek language. When the title *Christ* is used, it means the one that God chooses to rule, serve, or protect God’s people. “Chosen Ruler” is another way to translate the Greek word *Christ*. The Hebrew word *Messiah* was translated into the Greek

work *Christ*. The *Christ* or *Messiah* is the one chosen by God to be the ruler, the “anointed one” the one who shows people what God is like.

- **Fear** (Luke 24:5, 37) is the word used most often throughout the Bible to describe how people feel when they are aware of God’s presence. Fear is used to describe a complex emotional experience connected with the perception and awareness of the holy. The experience of the holy produces the accompanying reaction of attraction, fascination, repulsion, awe, love, trust, reverence, faith, and worship.
- **Freedom** (Luke 24:21) is a translation of the Greek word that means “to set free by paying the price demanded,” or redemption. In Luke, however, the emphasis is on redemption of the whole people of Israel by God’s pardoning grace.
- **Leader** (Luke 24:34, 36, 38, 41-47, 50, 51) is a translation of the Greek word *kyrios*. Luke’s story about Jesus is written in the Greek language. Many people who translate Luke’s story into English use the English word “lord” or “sir” for the Greek word *kyrios*. The Hebrew people believed that Yahweh (God) is too great, too big, too important to ever speak or write the name “Yahweh”. They use many words other than the name to talk about their God. Adonai is one of the Hebrew words used instead of Yahweh. *Adonai* is translated from Hebrew into the Greek word *Kyrios*. In Luke’s story about Jesus, the Greek word *kyrios* is used, sometimes to refer to Yahweh (God) and sometime to refer to Jesus, or the Christ. The translator decides which word to use in English. In this translation, when *kyrios* refers to Jesus or the Christ, it is translated as “Leader”. When the word refers to God, it is translated as “Yahweh.”
- **Messenger** (Luke 24:23) is one who is sent as an envoy, by a person or by God. Angels were messengers of God.
- **Power** (Luke 24:49, 50) is to be able and to have strength, energy, authority, or majesty.
- **Prophet** (Luke 24:19) is a person who is led by God and speaks to people for God. God speaks to people through a prophet.
- **Scriptures** (Luke 24:32, 45) is what has been written. When New Testament writers use the word “scriptures,” they were referring to the writings they believed to be holy, or sacred, books. These books are the Jewish texts written in Hebrew, which some Christians call “The Old Testament.”
- **Sabbath** (Luke 23:56b) is the day set aside for rest and worship. The noun comes from the verb meaning “to stop,” or “to be at the end.” Sabbath was observed on the seventh day of the week.
- **Simon** (Luke 24:34) is the name of the follower to whom Jesus had given the new name “Peter”, which means “rock”. After Jesus predicts Peter’s denial, Luke used the old name, Simon, instead of the new name, Peter. In Acts 1, the beginning of the story of the early church, the author of Luke/Acts begins again to use the name Peter.
- **Spirit** (Luke 24:37, 39) is the noun form of the Greek word that means “to breathe,” or “to blow.” Its root meaning is wind, air in motion. It often is used to mean soul.
- **Temple** (Luke 24:53) is the building where people went to worship. Often, the word “temple” is used for the building and the surrounding grounds. In

Jerusalem, everything that is inside the large temple wall, which is like a high stone fence, is sometimes called “the temple.”